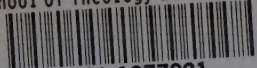


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“God grant us all grace to ken well and keep well Holy Writ.”—
PURVEY'S PROLOGUE TO WYCLIFFE'S BIBLE.

The translators of the English Bible of 1611 wrote in their preface:—

“It is not an herbe, but a tree, or rather a whole paradise of trees of life, which bring forth fruit euery moneth, and the fruit thereof is for meate, and the leaues for medicine. It is not a pot of *Manna*, or a cruse of oyle, which were for memorie only, or for a meales meate or two, but as it were a showre of heauenly bread sufficient for a whole host, be it neuer so great; and as it were a whole cellar full of oyle vessels; whereby all our necessities may be prouided for, and our debts discharged.”

The Abbé de Saint-Cyran advised his penitents to weigh all the words of Scripture as they would weigh pieces of gold. He used these words: “Car il faut vous bâtir une bibliothèque intérieure”. (“You must build for yourself an inner library.”)

“To the Bible men will return; and why? Because they cannot do without it. Because happiness is our being's end and aim, and happiness belongs to righteousness, and righteousness is revealed in the Bible. For this simple reason men will return to the Bible, just as a man who tried to give up food, thinking it was a vain thing and he could do without it, would return to food; or a man who tried to give up sleep, thinking it was a vain thing and he could do without it, would return to sleep.”¹

¹ Matthew Arnold's “Literature and Dogma”.

“‘Every man's life,’ says one of the Germans, ‘is a *Bible*, if he will read it.’ Which is most true. For the great God made us; and in marvellous ways goes with us, guiding us to the end. Amen, Amen.”²

² Thomas Carlyle, “New Letters,” 1904, p. 32.

Arthur Henry Hallam wrote:—

“I see that the Bible fits into every fold of the human heart. I am a man, and I believe it to be God's book because it is man's book.”³

³ “Tennyson and his Friends,” p. 461.

“Welcome, dear book, soul's Joy and Food! The feast
Of Spirits; Heav'n extracted lyes in thee.
Thou art life's Charter, The Dove's spotless nest
Where souls are hatch'd unto Eternitie.

In thee the hidden stone, the Manna lies;
Thou art the great Elixir rare and Choice;
The Key that opens to all Mysteries,
The Word in Characters, God in the Voice.”

—HENRY VAUGHAN.

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THE
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IN
LIFE AND LITERATURE

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BY
JANE T. STODDART

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO

TO
LADY ROBERTSON NICOLL

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PREFACE.

THIS work, in its general outline, was suggested to me some years ago by Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, and it owes very much to his help and guidance. His idea was that nothing should be borrowed from anthologies, compilations, or homiletic literature, but that an entirely new book should be built up from my private reading, with a narrative connecting as far as possible the passages of Scripture illustrated. I have not attempted to add to the number of Biblical encyclopædias or "museums," but have gathered from day to day some fresh line for that "vast palimpsest" of Holy Scripture, which, to adapt Dean Stanley's words on the Psalter, is "written over and over again, illuminated, illustrated by every conceivable incident and emotion of men and nations". This is not a field in which any new-comer needs to glean after others.

While the three great Books of Genesis, the Psalms, and Isaiah provide, as might be expected, the majority of passages illustrated, no Book of the Old Testament is entirely omitted, and I hope that many of the texts chosen may be useful to preachers as well as to private students of the Divine Word.

In selecting illustrations for the Psalter, I have avoided borrowing from books so well known and so highly valued as Mr. R. E. Prothero's classic work, "The Psalms in Human Life," Dr. John Ker's "The Psalms in History and Biography," and the Rev. C. L. Marson's "The Psalms at Work". The only anthology from which I have taken a few passages, with acknowledgment, is the little-known volume of the Rev. A. Saunders Dyer, "Psalm Mosaics" (Elliot Stock, 1895).

I have made free use of foreign literature, especially that of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The great Enders-

Kawerau edition of Luther's Letters is now approaching completion, and the fourteen volumes published at the time of writing have yielded some interesting passages. For the testimonies of other Reformers to the Bible I have relied partly on the priceless stores of the *Corpus Reformatorum*, partly on the best modern biographies, and the rapidly increasing mass of fugitive literature. New documents from the Reformation age appear month by month in German historical magazines.

My warmest thanks are due to such writers and archivists as Kawerau, Kroker, Otto Clemen, the late Professors Adolf Hausrath and N. Müller, with many others whose books and shorter publications have been my companions for the last five years.

For the literature of Port-Royal I have relied in the main on Sainte-Beuve and Charles Beard, for Spanish mystical writings on the standard Madrid editions.

I gratefully acknowledge much help received from Dr. Hay Fleming's edition of Patrick Walker's "Six Saints of the Covenant," and from Dr. J. S. Carroll's expositions of Dante.

Modern biographies have yielded precious material. While the testimonies of the masters of literature have been set forth, the majority of the illustrations are taken from the personal experience of the saints in all ages. With some exceptions mentioned in the footnotes all translations have been made at first hand. I may say, like Dr. Donne in the Preface to his "Progress of the Soul," "If I do borrow anything of antiquity, you shall find me still to acknowledge it, and to thank not him only that hath digged out treasure for me, but that lighted me a candle to the place".

The second volume, "The New Testament in Life and Literature," is well advanced, and will be published, I hope, without undue delay.

J. T. S.

September, 1913.

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LOVERS OF THE BIBLE.

It is an impressive sight that rises before us as we look back and see the great line of saints, and mark how all along the Bible has been their Book.—BISHOP FRANCIS PAGET.

"THE Bible," wrote Matthew Arnold, "is the only book well enough known to quote as the Greeks quoted Homer, sure that the quotation would go home to every reader." Renan said that in a thousand years two books only will be reprinted—the oldest books of humanity, Homer and the Bible. For nearly twice that period the Bible has been moulding life and literature. Milton reminds us that the edict of Julian, forbidding Christians the study of heathen learning, drove the two Apollinarii to "coin all the seven liberal sciences" out of the Bible. St. Jerome made the great Eastern book legible in the West, and the story of the Bible was carved in enduring stone, "a sacred encyclopædia," on the walls of Gothic Cathedrals. Mediaeval saints and scholars filled their lamps with Scripture oil. On the eve of the Reformation we find pious rulers like Eberhard of Würtemberg, founder of the University of Tübingen, diligently studying the Old Testament writings. When Francis of Rovere was made Pope, with the title of Sixtus IV, he begged his friend John Wessel, a "Reformer before the Reformation," to ask some gift for himself. Wessel asked only for a Greek and a Hebrew Bible from the Vatican Library. "It shall be done," said Sixtus, "but, foolish man, why did you not ask a bishopric or something of that sort?" "Because," rejoined Wessel, "of that I have no need." By order of the Pope he received a Bible, and the volume is said to have been long preserved in a convent near Groeningen, where Wessel spent part of his declining years.¹

¹ Ullmann's "Reformers before the Reformation," Vol. II, p. 324.

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The Reformers, as we know, were men of the Book.

Melanchthon, in his twenty-third year, wrote: "I am wholly occupied with sacred learning, and I should like you to turn your whole attention to it. A wondrous enjoyment—indeed, a kind of heavenly ambrosia—refreshes the mind which is busied with these studies."

Luther closed his life-long study of the Scriptures with these sentences, written on 16 February, 1546, two days before his death at Eisleben:—

"No one can understand Virgil's 'Bucolics' unless he has been for five years a herdsman.

"No one can understand Virgil's 'Georgics' unless he has been for five years a husbandman.

"No one can fully understand Cicero's 'Letters' unless he has been actively engaged for twenty-five years in a great commonwealth.

"Let no one think he has fully appreciated the Holy Scriptures unless he has governed congregations for a hundred years with prophets like Elijah and Elisha, John the Baptist, Christ and the Apostles.

"*"Hanc tu ne divinam Aeneïda tenta,
Sed vestigia pronus adora."*¹

Among Bible-lovers of the seventeenth century we may perhaps give the first place to M. de Saci of Port-Royal, who translated the Scriptures. This holy priest was a nephew of the first Mère Angélique, the reformer of Port-Royal, and a younger brother of MM. Le Maître and de Séricourt. He was born in 1613 and died at the age of seventy-one. Sainte-Beuve says of him: "In his direction of the solitaries and in his general guidance of souls, M. de Saci's great remedy, to which he pointed them before all things and always, was the reading of Holy Scripture and meditation upon it". "He used to say to us," writes Fontaine, "that a drop of water, which is not sufficient for a man, is sufficient for a bird. The waters of Holy Scripture have this peculiar property, that they are proportioned and suited to the needs of every soul. A lamb can walk therein,

¹"Lay not thy hand on this divine Aeneid, but follow its footsteps with deep reverence."—Köstlin-Kawerau, "Martin Luther," Vol. II, p. 621.

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and at the same time they are so deep that an elephant can swim in them."

He loved especially the Epistles of St. Paul, had them bound separately, and carried them constantly about with him. On the day when he was arrested and taken to the Bastille, his chief regret was that he had not with him his "little St. Paul". He had been expecting imprisonment for two years, and used to say :—

"Let them do what they like with me, let them put me where they please; I fear nothing if only I can have my St. Paul with me." On the day when he was arrested in the street, he happened to have left the book behind, as the weather was very hot and he had a long way to go.

Fontaine quoted the saying of Jansen: "I would go to the end of the world with St. Augustine". "And I," said M. de Sacy, "would go with my Bible."

He had reached the age of fifty-five when, on the eve of All Saints' Day, 1668, he finished his version of the whole Bible.

Sainte-Beuve mentions that the life of this good man harmonized with his special mission of interpreting the Word of God. He was constantly thinking how he could best fit himself to accomplish his sacred task. His translation was made from the Vulgate, with the assistance of the notes of Vatable.¹

Coming to modern times and to our own country, we find that two great British writers stand forth conspicuously in the ranks of Bible-lovers—Scott and Ruskin. One of Scott's novels, "The Monastery," is indeed a "golden Ark of Scripture". His inmost feelings are expressed in the lines spoken by the White Lady of Avenel :—

"Within that awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries!
Happiest they of human race,
To whom God has granted grace
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, and force the way;
And better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn."

¹ Sainte-Beuve, "Port-Royal," Vol. II, pp. 342-61.

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Lockhart remarks that Sir Walter knew the Bible, the Old Testament especially, by heart. During his happy days at Ashestiel, after reading the Church service on Sunday to the household, he usually walked with his whole family, dogs included, to some favourite spot at a considerable distance from his house—most frequently the ruined tower of Elibank—and there dined with them in the open air. “Here, or at home, if the weather kept them from their ramble, his Sunday talk was just such a series of Biblical lessons as that which we have preserved for the permanent use of rising generations in his ‘Tales of a Grandfather’ on the early history of Scotland.” “I wish,” adds Lockhart, “he had committed that other series to writing too; how different that would have been from our thousand compilations of dead epitome and imbecile cant!”

Sir Walter's mother died on 24 December, 1819. “There is in the library at Abbotsford,” says Lockhart, “a fine copy of Baskerville's folio Bible, two volumes, printed at Cambridge in 1763; and there appears on the blank leaf, in the trembling handwriting of Scott's mother, this inscription—‘To my dear son, Walter Scott, from his affectionate mother, Anne Rutherford. January 1st, 1819.’”

Under these words her son has written as follows: “This Bible was the gift of my grandfather Dr. John Rutherford to my mother, and presented by her to me; being, alas! the last gift which I was to receive from that excellent parent, and as I verily believe, the thing which she most loved in the world—not only in humble veneration of the sacred contents, but as the dearest pledge of her father's affection to her. As such she gave it to me; and as such I bequeath it to those who may represent me—charging them carefully to preserve the same, in memory of those to whom it has belonged. 1820.”

In his last days Sir Walter's recollections of the Bible “appeared to be lively”. “Commonly whatever we could follow him in,” writes his biographer, “was a fragment of the Bible (especially the prophecies of Isaiah and the Book of Job)—or some petition in the Litany—or a verse of some psalm (in the old Scotch metrical version)—or of some of the magnificent hymns of the Romish ritual, in which he had always delighted, but which probably hung on his memory now

LOVERS OF THE BIBLE

in connexion with the Church services he had attended while in Italy."

"Read to me," said the dying man as the end drew near.

"From what book?" asked Lockhart, who was watching beside him.

"Need you ask?" he answered. "There is but one."¹

Three other examples may be given in this connexion of the sacred memories that gather in life and literature round the words, "My Mother's Bible".

Aubrey de Vere, in his "Recollections," quotes the following sonnet by his sister, mentioning that Cardinal Newman, to whom it was sent, was deeply moved by it:—

"To her Mother's Bible.

"She read thee to the last, beloved book!
Her wasted fingers 'mid thy pages strayed;
Upon thy promises her heart was stayed!
Upon thy letters lingered her last look
Ere life and love those gentlest eyes forsook:
Upon thy gracious words she daily fed;
And by thy light her faltering feet were led
When loneliness her inmost being shook.
O Friend, O Saviour, O Sustaining Word,
Whose conquering feet the Spirit-land have trod,
Be near her where she is, Incarnate Lord!
In the mysterious silence of the tomb
Where righteous spirits wait their final doom,
Forsake her not, O Omnipresent God!"

—ELLEN O'BRIEN.

Vice-Chancellor Sir Alfred Dale, in his address on the Bible delivered to Leeds University students on 5 November, 1911, took an illustration from "Pendennis".

"It would be easy," he said, "to find a score of passages in which Thackeray caught his inspiration from gospel or from psalm. But there is one passage in which he reveals himself unconsciously; and unconscious revelations are the surest. You remember the story of George Warrington in 'Pendennis'—

¹ Lockhart's "Life of Scott," ch. 83.

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the young man who has made shipwreck, and has to atone for a single act of folly by a life without ambition, without love, and almost without hope. He is left to face it all, alone; alone with the flowers that recall the vision of joy that has come and passed him by, and with the Bible that a grateful mother has left as a parting gift; the fading flowers, and the unfading book; alone with them, alone with the night.

“And the morning found him still reading in its awful pages, in which so many stricken hearts, in which so many tender and faithful souls have found comfort under calamity, and refuge and hope in affliction.”¹

The third example is from a recent newspaper report.

During a Bible Society meeting in Stockton in December, 1911, the Bishop of Durham (Dr. Moule) held up his mother's worn Bible, with binding loosened by age and use. “This book,” he said, “was my mother's constant aliment. Though the mother of eight boys, of whom I am the youngest, she was one of the most wonderful Bible students I ever knew. Living a life crowded with domestic and parochial service, by rising early and retiring late she read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested the Word of God, and nourished a faith which was the sheet-anchor of her sons in the questionings of their younger days.”

Sir E. T. Cook thinks that the total number of references to the Bible traced in the index to Ruskin's Complete Works must be about 5000. “He knew the Bible almost by heart, and he generally quoted it in his books from memory.”²

“His mother's daily readings with him ‘established his soul in life’ and were ‘the one essential part in all his education’.” She began with the first chapter of Genesis, went straight through to the last verse of the Apocalypse, and began again at Genesis the next day. I have been told that on the night before he was three years of age he repeated to his mother the whole of the 119th Psalm. The child had also to learn the whole of ‘the fine old Scottish paraphrases’. To this daily discipline he attributed the cultivation of his ear and his sense of style. They read alternate verses, she ‘watching

¹ “Expositor,” January, 1912.

“The Life of Ruskin,” Vol. I, p. 355.

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every intonation, allowing not so much as a syllable to be missed or misplaced'. All this was a study not only in religion, and in Bible literature; but a discipline in attention and in all literature. 'The duty enforced upon me in early youth of reading every word of the Gospels and prophecies as if written by the hand of God, gave me the habit of awed attention which made many passages of the profane writers, frivolous to an irreligious reader, deeply grave to me.'"¹

Mrs. Ruskin's habit of reading the Bible without skipping has a parallel in the case of Richard Lynch Cotton, Provost of Worcester College, Oxford, who made a practice, Dean Burgon tells us, of reading the Bible completely through once every year: and would insist on the importance of never missing a chapter (in Leviticus, for example); assigning as a reason, that there is always *something* in every chapter which no one can afford to let go unread.²

On Good Friday (9 April, 1852) Ruskin wrote to his father from Venice on a crisis of anxiety about his health:—

"I thought of my investigations of the Bible and found no comfort in that either, for there seemed to be nothing but darkness and doubt in it; and as I was thinking of these things the illness increased upon me, and my chest got sore, and I began coughing just as I did at Salisbury, and I thought I was going to have another violent attack at once, and that all my work at Venice must be given up. This was about two in the morning. So I considered that I had now neither pleasure in looking to my past life, nor any hope, such as would be any comfort to me on a sick-bed, of a future one. And I made up my mind that this would never do. So after thinking a little more about it, I resolved that at any rate I would act as if the Bible *were* true; that if it were not, at all events I should be no worse off than I was before; that I would believe in Christ, and take Him for my Master in whatever I did; that assuredly to disbelieve the Bible was quite as difficult as to believe it; that there were mysteries either way, and that the best mystery was that which gave me Christ for a master. And when I had done this I fell asleep directly. When I rose in the morning the cold and

¹ "The Life of Ruskin," Vol. I, p. 13.

² "Twelve Good Men," Vol. II, p. 79.

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cough were gone; and though I was still unwell, I felt a peace and spirit in me I had never known before, at least to the same extent; and the next day I was quite well, and everything has seemed to go right with me ever since, all discouragement and difficulties vanishing even in the smallest things.”¹

Pages might be filled with the mere catalogue of famous writers who could say, “I rejoice at Thy Word, as one that findeth great spoil”. A few names may suffice at this point.

Sir Thomas Browne wrote that even if the Holy Scriptures had been a work of man, they would have been “the most singular and superlative piece that hath been extant since the creation”.

“Were I a pagan, I should not refrain the lecture of it: and cannot but commend the judgment of Ptolemy, that thought not his library complete without it. . . . Men’s works have an age, like themselves; and though they outlive their authors, yet have they a stint and period to their duration. This only is a work too hard for the teeth of time, and cannot perish but in the general flames, when all things shall confess their ashes.”²

Coleridge said:—

“Intense study of the Bible will keep any man from being *vulgar*, in point of style.”

Mr. Cross says in his biography of George Eliot:—

“We generally began our reading at Witley with some chapters of the Bible, which was a very precious and sacred book to her, not only from early association, but also from the profound conviction of its importance in the development of the religious life of man. She particularly enjoyed reading aloud some of the finest chapters of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and St. Paul’s Epistles. With a naturally rich, deep voice, rendered completely flexible by constant practice, with the keenest perception of the requirements of emphasis; and with the most subtle modulations of tone, her reading threw a glamour over indifferent writing, and gave to the greatest writing fresh meanings and beauty.”

Harriet Martineau thought of preparing a work on the natural history of the Bible; and Dr. Stokes, who had given

¹ “The Life of Ruskin,” Vol. I, p. 271.

² “Religio Medici.”

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up a professorship for conscience' sake, offered to place at her disposal his valuable body of manuscript notes on the subject. "Mr. Kenrick, too," wrote Miss Martineau, "has sent me Jahn's 'Biblical Archæology,' from the York library, to keep till the close of the vacation. It would cost three guineas; and necessary and valuable as it is, I could not afford that. Little did I think to make such a use of German already. I am busy now, reading the Bible through in course for my work."

Baron von Bunsen spent his last years at a villa on the bank of the Neckar, opposite the Castle of Heidelberg, where he used his leisure to issue a corrected text of the Bible, enriched with copious notes. He died before it was completed.

Frédéric Godet wrote from Berlin at the age of twenty-three to a friend who was preparing for the ministry :—

"And for *life*, what shall I say? Just this one word. Keep your two readings of the Bible carefully apart—one for your personal edification and the other for the increase of your knowledge, and never allow the first to be merged in the second. Never let a morning pass without *feeding* on the Bible. The Bible ought to be the *bread of life* for our hearts before it becomes a light for our eyes. I speak from my own experience. Don't be afraid that your *scientific* reading may suffer from this separation. Outward separation is often the very path of inward reunion. And for your heart-reading, let me give you the advice of Bengel: 'Betend lesen, lesend beten'. ('Pray as you read; read as you pray'.)"¹

To the same friend, two years later, Dr. Godet wrote: "Keep your *practical* reading of the Bible always separate". He thought that in working at the Bible for theological examinations the student may neglect his own spiritual profit. "Never drift away (as I did for long) into fancying that your exegetical reading can suffice for your soul. You may swallow a great deal of that bread without having a crumb of the true bread of life which feeds the soul."²

Theodore Watts-Dunton writes :—

"A great living savant has characterized the Bible as 'a collection of the rude imaginings of Syria,' 'the worn-out old

¹ "Frédéric Godet," by Philippe Godet (Fischbacher, 1913), pp. 98, 99.

² *Ibid.* p. 101.

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bottle of Judaism into which the generous new wine of science is being poured'. The great savant was angry when he said so. The 'new wine' of science is a generous vintage, undoubtedly, and deserves all the respect it gets from us; so do those who make it and serve it out; they have so much intelligence; they are so honest and fearless. But whatever may become of their wine in a few years, when the wine-dealers shall have passed away, when the savant is forgotten as any star-gazer of Chaldæa—the 'old bottle' is going to be older yet—the Bible is going to be eternal. For that which decides the vitality of any book is precisely that which decides the value of any human soul—not the knowledge it contains, but simply the attitude it assumes towards the universe, unseen as well as seen. The attitude of the Bible is just that which every soul must, in its highest and truest moods, always assume—that of a wise wonder in front of such a universe as this—that of a noble humility before a God such as He 'in whose great Hand we stand'. This is why—like Alexander's mirror—like that most precious 'Cup of Jemshid,' imagined by the Persians—the Bible reflects to-day, and will reflect for ever, every wave of human emotion, every passing event of human life—reflect them as faithfully as it did to the great and simple people in whose great and simple tongue it was written. Coming from the Vernunft of Man, it goes straight to the Vernunft. This is the kind of literature that never does die: a fact which the world has discovered long ago. For the Bible is Europe's one book. And with regard to Asia, as far back as the time of Chrysostom it could have been read in languages Syrian, Indian, Persian, Armenian, Ethiopic, Scythian, and Samaritan; now it can be read in every language, and in almost every dialect, under the sun."¹

The world's leaders in action as well as in thought have made the Bible their daily companion. There will be something to say in later pages about the use of Bible passages by the martyrs, the heroes of all Christian centuries, to whom J. M. Neale applies the words of the prophet Nahum, "The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet". Here is one anecdote on a martyr's Bible, told by Patrick Walker.

¹ James Douglas, "Theodore Watts-Dunton," pp. 229-30.

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John Watt, one of the persecuted in the Killing Time in Scotland, was taken by order of the Council of Edinburgh to the Gallow-lee when it was dark and suddenly executed along with his companions, Robert and Gabriel Semple.

"After the bloody rope was about John Watt's neck, having no more need of the Bible, he threw it down, saying, 'Give that to my brother'. A woman yet alive, my near neighbour, kept (i.e. caught) it in her hands."¹

Take two examples only of the preciousness of the Sacred Word to missionaries.

James Gilmour of Mongolia wrote in 1890 :—

"What helps me most just at present is the Psalms. I take a few verses every morning (almost) and learn off the Chinese translations of them. I never knew there was so much in the Psalms before. I believe that even at the end of a long life, this (discovery of more and more in God's Word) will hold true of all the Bible, and then for the beyond there is the inexhaustible Himself—satisfaction for the present and plenty for the future."

Shortly before his death, Gilmour wrote to one of his brothers :—

"Go for your Bible, brother. There is no end more in it than you or I have yet seen. I am going for it both in Chinese and English, and it pays as nothing else does."

Livingstone wrote on 18 April, 1872 :—

"I pray the good Lord of all to favour me so as to allow me to discover the ancient fountains of Herodotus, and if there is anything in the underground excavations to confirm the precious old documents (*τὰ βιβλία*), the Scriptures of truth, may He permit me to bring it to light, and give me wisdom to make a proper use of it."

Along with these we may place the story of a humble Italian priest who taught the Bible to his peasants as Livingstone taught it to the natives of Lake Bangweolo.

In Cardinal Vaughan's life we read that when, as Bishop of Salford, he was staying at Sorrento, he went to visit Padre Ludovico, a priest who all along the coast was reputed to be a

¹ Six Saints of the Covenant, Vol. II, p. 98.

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saint. When the Bishop found him he was in great pain and apparently had not long to live. He was lying upon a bed of straw, and the shelves round the room were laden with copies of the Bible, divided into twelve little volumes, in Italian and with notes. This had been one of his works, to popularize the Scriptures.

The brave traveller, Sir Sven Hedin, wrote after returning from his perilous travels in Tibet :—

“Without a strong and absolute belief in God and in His almighty protection I should not have been able to live in Asia’s wildest regions for twelve years. During all my journeys the Bible has always been my best lecture and company.”

Lady Victoria Campbell wrote in 1882 :—

“In the afternoon of this Saturday came Lord Shaftesbury, bringing such a waft of old days. ‘My last counsel to you, my dear, is to keep the letter of Holy Writ; the moment we go beyond this we lose ourselves.’ Such were some of his words.”

John Bright’s biographer says that his early morning studies, and his perfect familiarity with the Bible and Milton, had not a little to do with the high standard of language which he set before himself from the first. “If my manner of speaking is good,” he wrote when an old man, “it may have become so from reading what is good.”¹

Lord Morley has said that the most impressive and pure piece of religion that he ever witnessed was John Bright reading a chapter of the Bible to his maid-servants shortly after his wife’s death, in his beautiful and feeling voice, followed by the Quaker silence.²

Of Abraham Lincoln it was said that he built up his entire reading upon his early study of the Bible.

“He had mastered it absolutely; mastered it as later he mastered only one or two books, notably Shakespeare; mastered it so that he became almost a man of one book.”³

The present American President, Dr. Woodrow Wilson,

¹ G. M. Trevelyan, “Life of John Bright,” p. 25.

² *Ibid.* p. 424.

³ Quoted by Prof. Albert S. Cook in “The Authorized Version of the Bible and its Influence,” p. 77.

LOVERS OF THE BIBLE

used these words at the close of a lecture on the "Bible and Progress".

"I ask of every man and woman in this audience that, from this night on, they will realize that part of the destiny of America lies in their daily perusal of this great book of revelation—that if they would see America free and pure they will make their own spirits free and pure by this baptism of the Holy Scripture."

The "Temps" published in September, 1912, an account of a talk between the present German Emperor and a former governess. In the course of it he said: "I hold to my Bible, which I constantly read and re-read. In it one finds the solution of every difficulty and of every problem, even of a political description."

Our own beloved King, carrying out an early promise made to his mother, Queen Alexandra, reads a chapter of the Bible daily.

Remembering such examples, may we not say of the Holy Book as of the Holy City, "They shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it"?

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

“The Old Testament . . . is even more deeply, personally comforting than the New in times of great danger or of sharp affliction. God’s hand and eye are so sensibly felt there, His goodness and severity shown in the guidance, chastening, and deliverance of individuals. Not only in His care of kings and prophets, and evidently *selected* persons, like Jacob, Hezekiah, Jonah, and David, but in His pity for poor, forsaken, disconsolate women, grieved in soul and harassed by unkindness, like Hagar, Leah, Hannah. ‘Lo, this poor man cried and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.’ ‘Behold, the eye of the Lord is on them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy, to *deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in time of dearth.*’ It is this sense of what Herder calls ‘the insight, foresight, and oversight of God’ that has made the Book of Psalms the covenant poetry of the human race. They are founded upon a sense of friendship, and an established personal relation with God ; a familiar and friendly confidence upon which Herder considers man’s first religious ideas to have been founded and to which God Himself has invited man.”—DORA GREENWELL.

Dr. F. Godet delivered in 1869 a memorable address on “The Sanctity of the Old Testament,” in reply to an attack by his colleague, Prof. Ferdinand Buisson. He opened with these words :—

“I am here to plead before you, Not Guilty. What do I say, Not Guilty ? Holy, thrice holy.”¹

“The principal books of the Old Testament are things to be deeply enjoyed.”—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

¹ “Life of F. Godet” (1913), p. 356.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

The first of ancient books is the first of modern books ; indeed, so to speak, it is the author of them all, for from these pages were to proceed all the languages, all the eloquence, all the poetry and all the civilization that later times have known.—OZANAM.¹

CHRISTIAN writers of the early centuries were constantly occupied with the study of Genesis. St. Basil, St. Ambrose, and St. Gregory of Nyssa spent much time and thought on the problems raised in the first chapter. The Abbé Stanislas Gamber notes that the extraordinary events which had taken place in Judæa and which were regarded by the faithful as the epilogue of a magnificent drama, lent a keener interest and a more vivid charm to the early scenes, and to the prologue which was accomplished under the shades of Eden. "In the view of Christians, the fall of the first man had been finally retrieved by the death of Christ, and the serpent, which seduced Eve, had been crushed for ever by Mary, the second mother of the human race. By the Incarnation of His Son, God the Father had, as it were, made a new creation of souls ; and humanity, which had eaten the fruit of death from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, had regained its life at the foot of the Tree of the Cross. The happy days of Eden might now return, a new golden age might dawn upon the earth, and the hope of a better future might spring up once more in the hearts of redeemed men."²

Luther said :—

"Genesis is the right book. We ought to read it and teach it. There we see that the most ancient patriarchs accepted our faith. I do not think, however, that it was written by Moses, for there were books in earlier times and some of them are

¹ "La Civilisation au V^{me} Siècle, Vol. II, p. 147.

² "Le Livre de la 'Genèse' dans la Poésie Latine au V^{me} Siècle," p. 47.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

quoted: 'The Book of the Wars of the Lord,' and 'The Book of Jasher'. I think that Adam wrote during several generations, and after him Noah and others, about what had happened to them. For the Jews were the very earliest writers. The Greeks began late and the Germans have written for barely 1000 years." ¹

The same Reformer said in another place:—

"Genesis is a lofty book; we can never exhaust its meaning." ²

Melanchthon wrote in 1542 in the preface to the first edition of his works:—

"There is no doubt that the Book of Genesis is the most learned of all the prophetic writings." ³

In a letter to a Nuremberg friend he wrote:—

"No human eloquence is capable of praising as it deserves that first history of the world which lies before us in the Book of Genesis. For it is the fountain of all the wisdom of the Church of God." ⁴

In his work on "The Book of Genesis in the Latin Poetry of the Fifth Century" (1899), the Abbé Stanislas Gamber remarks that early Christian poets did not venture to describe the life of our Lord with any free inspiration, because the figure was to them so ideal and so superhuman that it seemed a profanation for human hands to touch it. He quotes the words of Ozanam: "Les poètes ne peuvent lui prêter la parole et l'action, parce que la réalité de l'Evangile les écrase".

"It was very different with the Old Testament and especially with Genesis, where the material seems to leave more freedom to the poet and to impose less constraint on his inspiration. Christian writers have drawn largely from this full-flowing spring, which does not dry up even when the Latin has given place to modern languages. The story of Genesis forms the theme of many epic poems, until the time comes when it

¹ E. Kroker, "Luthers Tischreden in der Mathesischen Sammlung" (1903), No. 107.

² *Ibid.* No. 574.

³ "Corpus Reformatorum," Vol. IV, col. 718.

⁴ Melanchthon to Veit Dietrich. Letter written on Christmas Day, 1543. "Corp. Ref.," Vol. V, col. 257.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

robes itself in one of its perfect forms in the writings of a man of genius, and gives us that immortal masterpiece which we call Milton's 'Paradise Lost'. So it was with those torches which the runners passed from hand to hand in the games of the stadium and to which Lucretius has so admirably compared our life." ¹

Mr. Canton describes the Bible Society's progress at Rabat in Morocco. "The place was Moslem of the Moslems, but during the time he (Mr. Mackintosh) was detained there he went without check from street to street, from shop to shop. Large groups listened to him and questioned him. Every day some books were sold. The lads delighted in Genesis—'the Beginning of the World' as they called it. At the mosque objections were raised to misunderstood phrases—'God making men in His own image,' 'resting from His work,' and the like—and books were brought back, but though some of the friendly grew cold, there was no hostility".²

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

"That sublime and precious production, the first chapter of Genesis."—W. E. GLADSTONE.³

"Read the first chapter of Genesis without prejudice," said Coleridge in his "Table-Talk," "and you will be convinced at once. After the narrative of the creation of the earth and brute animals, Moses seems to pause, and says: 'And God said, Let us make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness'. And in the next chapter, he repeats the narrative: 'And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life'; and then he adds these words, *and man became a living soul*. Materialism will never explain those last words."

¹ "Le Livre de la 'Genèse' dans la Poésie Latine au V^me Siècle," p. vi.

² "History of the Bible Society," Vol. V, pp. 3, 4.

³ In a letter to Bishop Boyd-Carpenter.

THE CREATION STORY.

Mrs. G. F. Watts mentions that when her husband was dying, he beckoned to the watchers to come nearer, "and he tried to put into words a state of vision he had been in when he appeared to be neither sleeping nor waking. He had looked into the Book of Creation, and understood that the whole could be comprehended—made plain from that other point of view which was not our earthly one. 'A glorious state,' he called it; and we looked on the face of one who had at last seen 'true being,' when he said, 'Now I see that great Book—I see that great Light'."

"Theophilus of Antioch, in the most ancient Hexameron left to us, says that no man on earth, even if he had a thousand mouths and a thousand tongues, would be able to describe worthily and to explain fully the whole economy of the works divinely accomplished in the Six Days of Creation."¹

"The wonders of the Creation, too constantly overlooked as common occurrences."—GILBERT WHITE OF SELBORNE.

I.-III.—Dr. Marcus Dods wrote at the age of sixteen:—

"I think it is one of the most delightful things possible to ponder over what this world is—why it was made, how it fell, and how it was redeemed; you are completely carried away, and if God had not given us His Word, the narrow and revengeful mind of many could not easily believe that God would really receive for His Son's joint heirs in eternal life those creatures who hate Him as their worst enemy, and continually rebel against him. And it is scarcely possible to see how, if a man were seriously to think over his state, and the offer held out by God to him if he would turn from his sins, he could possibly reject it."²

I.-III.—Old Martin Poyser, in "Adam Bede," was accustomed to read the first three chapters of Genesis on Sunday afternoons when the rest of the family were at Hayslope Church.

¹ The Abbé Gamber, "Le Livre de la 'Genèse' dans la Poésie Latine au V^{me} Siècle," p. 54.

² "Early Letters," p. 28.

I.—*The days of Creation.*

Dr. Delitzsch observes that, according to an Indian view, "the history of the world runs its course in an infinite series of creations and destructions". . . . The entire duration of the continuance of one of these creations is called a day, the interval of destruction until the next renovation a night of Brahma.

I. 1.—*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

The words of Genesis i. 1, as read by a young Japanese in 1864, were the means of awakening within him a strong desire to learn more of the God of whom they speak. The youth, whose name was Neeshima, had got hold of a geography book in Chinese, published by an American missionary, of which the first words were, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth". "Who was the God?" the youth asked himself. He did not live in Japan, but perhaps He was in America, whence the author of the book came, and thither he would go and seek for God. The old law forbidding the Japanese to leave their country was still in force, but at the peril of his life he made his way to China in a trading vessel, and thence to Boston. Here he found himself greatly perplexed, and said to the ship captain with whom he had travelled, "I came all the way to Boston to find God, and there is no one to tell me". The captain took him to the owner of the vessel, Mr. Hardy, a well-known Christian merchant. This gentleman treated him as a son, and sent him to college. He soon found the God he had been seeking, and became an earnest follower of Christ. In 1875 he returned to Japan as a missionary and became principal of a Christian college at Kioto, in connexion with the American Congregationalist Mission.¹

Sir Thomas Browne speaks of "that gentle heat that brooded on the waters, and in six days hatched the world".

"This," he says, "is that irradiation that dispels the mists of hell, the clouds of horror, fear, sorrow and despair; and preserves the region of the mind in serenity. Whosoever feels not

¹ "The Church Pulpit Commentary. Genesis to Deuteronomy," p. 4.

the warm gale and gentle ventilation of this spirit (though I feel his pulse) I dare not say he lives ; for truly without this, to me, there is no heat under the tropick ; nor any light, though I dwelt in the body of the sun.”¹

In the opening lines of “Paradise Lost,” Milton appeals to the Holy Spirit for aid :—

“And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know’st : Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
Dove-like, sat’st brooding on the vast abyss,
And mad’st it pregnant ; what in me is dark,
Illumine ; what is low, raise and support :
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.”

1. 3.—*And God said, Let there be light : and there was light.*

“St. Augustine says that while Moses omitted direct mention of the creation of Angels, it must be regarded as signified in the creation of light on the first day : ‘For when God said, “Let there be light : and there was light,” if we are justified in understanding in this light the creation of the angels, then certainly they were created partakers of the eternal light which is the unchangeable Wisdom of God, by which all things were made, and whom we call the only begotten Son of God’—a passage which Dante may have had in mind when he calls the Angelic nature the ‘*splendour*’ of God, which has its subsistence in reflecting His light.”²

Let there be light.

The Archbishop of Canterbury preached from this text at the centenary service of the Bible Society in St. Paul’s Cathedral, 6 March, 1904. Among the congregation were Queen Alexandra, the Prince and Princess of Wales (now King George V and Queen Mary), and Princess Victoria. His Grace contrasted the Shrove Sunday of 1527, when potentates of the

¹ “Religio Medici.”

² J. S. Carroll, “In Patria,” p. 450.

English Church and realm watched from that very spot the burning of the English New Testament at the foot of the famous Rood of Northen, with this Bible Sunday and this gathering of princes, clergy, and people to thank God for the distribution of His word to every nation under heaven. True science and true religion he described as sisters; adding that "nothing but disaster could arise from the petulant scorn of the one or from the timidity or the tyrannies of the other". Referring to the Society's struggle with poverty, distance, and language, "we look upwards," he said, "and outwards and onwards; we thank God and take courage".¹

I. 6.—*Let it divide the waters from the waters.*

Piscator says, in "The Complete Angler":—

"And now for the water, the element that I trade in. The water is the eldest daughter of the creation, the element upon which the Spirit of God did first move, the element which God commanded to bring forth living creatures abundantly; and without which, those that inhabit the land, even all creatures that have breath in their nostrils, must suddenly return to putrefaction. Moses, the great law-giver, and chief philosopher, skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians, who was called the friend of God, and knew the mind of the Almighty, names this element the first in the creation; this is the element upon which the Spirit of God did first move, and is the chief ingredient in the creation: many philosophers have made it to comprehend all the other elements, and most allow it the chiefest in the mixture of all living creatures."

I. 14.—*Let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.*

"It is no small loss to the world, when one of its master spirits—one of its great lights—a king among the nations—leaves it. A sun is extinguished; a great attractive, regulating power is withdrawn. For though it be a common, it is also a natural thought, to compare that great man to the sun; it is in many respects significant. Like the sun, he rules his day, and he is 'for a sign and for seasons, and for days and for years';

¹ W. Canton, "History of the Bible Society," Vol. V, pp. 388, 389.

he enlightens, quickens, attracts, and leads after him his host—his generation.”—DR. JOHN BROWN.¹

I. 14-19.—Dr. Skinner, in his “Commentary on Genesis,” points out that the religious significance of this passage is very great “inasmuch as it marks the advance of Hebrew thought from the heathen notion of the stars to a pure monotheism. To the ancient world, and the Babylonians in particular, the heavenly bodies were animated beings, and the more conspicuous of them were associated or identified with the gods. The idea of them as an animated host occurs in Hebrew poetry, . . . but here it is entirely eliminated; the heavenly bodies being reduced to mere luminaries, i.e. either embodiments of light, or perhaps simply ‘lamps’. It is possible, as Gunkel thinks, that a remnant of the old astrology lurks in the word dominion; but whereas in Babylonia the stars ruled over human affairs in general, their influence here is restricted to that which obviously depends on them, viz. the alternation of day and night, the festivals, etc.”

1. 16.—*He made the stars also.*

Each of the three divisions of Dante’s “Commedia” ends with the word “stars”. As the poet regains the upper world after his journey through the “Inferno,” he sees the shining of the Easter stars. “From the summit of Mount Purgatory he mounts among them. In the ‘Paradiso’ he becomes one with the power which moves them all :—

‘Already my desire and will were turned,
Even as a wheel that equally is moved,
By the Love that moves the sun and the other stars.’”²

“Many a soul is thankful that He did not forget the stars. It is easy to believe that the greater lights were hung in the firmament by the fingers of God; but it is a solace to remember that He made the stars also. The splendid sun and the gentle moon—they are not more truly His than the stars, which are so many that they cannot be counted for multitude. It is, perhaps, not too much to see in this allusion to the stars a touch of

¹ In his “Essay on Dr. Chalmers”.

² J. S. Carroll, “Exiles of Eternity,” p. 492.

that tender regard which the Bible shows everywhere for the small and the weak things, and the things which seem to be of no account. In the lordly sun which rules the day, rejoicing like a hero as he runs across the sky, and in the gracious moon which gently rules the night, the Bible does not forget the little twinkling stars; for they too are God's. 'He made the stars also.'"¹

I. 20.—General Gordon has this passage in his Khartoum diary:—

"I am one of those who believe in the fore and future existence of what we call animals. We have the history of man, shaped in the image and likeness of God. He had breathed into him the breath of God, and became alive, while the waters and earth were told to bring forth animals *that had life already* (Gen. i. 20). 'That hath life.' Take Psalm viii. 'What is man, Thou hast put *all things* under his feet.' What a fall there is in the next verse, '*All sheep and oxen*,' and turn to Hebrews ii. 8, where the same Psalm is quoted, and where *all things* are subject to Him. All principalities, powers, and every existence are under Him. Why did the Psalmist go out of his way to quote 'sheep and oxen,' unless they were (so to say) the incarnation of these powers and principalities? Man, however much he has fallen, has the grand pre-eminence over all creatures, *he was shaped* (the word is the same as is used for a potter making a clay vessel) *in God's image and likeness*, and it is only God who could have so shaped him, as it is only God who knew His own likeness. Also when our Lord took our form (which He still keeps) as man, in Him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead, so that there is no doubt (as he differed only from us in being sinless) that man is capable of containing the fullness of the Godhead. Our belief is that *as man* our Lord governs heaven and earth, not a sparrow falling without His permission; this being so, the *capacity* of man must be such as to allow of his being so endowed as to rule all events in heaven and earth, for it is distinctly said our Lord was incarnated in a similar body to ours, except without sin. Our Lord, who is now man for ever and ever, is not likely to have taken a form which con-

¹ J. E. Macfadyen, "The City with Foundations," p. 23.

tained any hindrance to His fullness of Godhead, therefore the form He took must be perfect, and as our difference between Him and us is our sin (which He has taken away), we, in our turn, must be capable of realizing His fullness of Godhead, and my belief is that our future happiness is in being finite intelligences."

1. 26.—*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*

"We cannot exhaust the significance of that sentence, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness'. . . . If we are 'in the image' of God, we are to Him as the shade is to the substance. It is an exceeding high mystery, but I think that the positive notion of the Infinite, which we all have, is a hint to us of that 'image'."—DR. JOHN DUNCAN.¹

1. 27.—*So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him.*

"It was a fancy of mediaeval theologians that God had written the words *Homo Dei* on the 'human face divine,' in token that man is created in His image. . . . Longfellow gives the following extract from a sermon by Brother Berthold, a Franciscan monk of Regensburg, in the thirteenth century: 'The two eyes are two O's. The *h* is properly no letter; it only helps the others; so that *homo* with an *h* means Man. Likewise the brows arched above and the nose down between them are an *m*, beautiful with three strokes. So is the ear a *d* beautifully rounded and ornamented. So are the nostrils beautifully formed like a Greek *e*, beautifully rounded and ornamented. So is the mouth an *i*, beautifully adorned and ornamented. Now behold, ye good Christian people, how skilfully He has adorned you with these six letters, to show that ye are His own, and that He has created you! Now read me an *o* and an *m* and another *o* together; that spells *homo*. Then read me a *d* and an *e* and an *i* together; that spells *dei*. *Homo dei*, man of God, man of God!'"

So Dante says, in describing the emaciation of the penitents on the Terrace of Gluttony:—

"Their eye-sockets seemed rings without the gems;
He who in the face of man reads *omo*
Might plainly there have recognized the *m*."²

¹ "Colloquia Peripatetica."

² J. S. Carroll, "Prisoners of Hope," p. 315.

I. 31.—*And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good.*

For one of the friends who watched by his bedside the dying William Blake coloured with his utmost skill that significant design of the "Ancient of Days," which may well bear comparison with the sublimity of Milton and Michael Angelo. After he had frequently touched upon it, and frequently held it at a distance, he threw it from him and with an air of exultation exclaimed, "There, that will do; I cannot mend it".

II. 1-3.—*The Sabbath rest.*

"Josephus, that learned Jew," says Izaak Walton, "tells us of a river in Judæa that runs swiftly all the six days of the week, and stands still and rests all their Sabbath."

On the institution of the Sabbath, Dr. Skinner has these words:—

"The writer's idea of the Sabbath and its sanctity is almost too realistic for the modern mind to grasp: it is not an institution which exists or ceases with its observance by man; the divine rest is a fact as much as the divine working, and so the sanctity of the day is a fact whether man secures the benefit or not. There is no trace of the idea that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath; it is an ordinance of the Kosmos like any other part of the creative operations, and is for the good of man in precisely the same sense as the whole creation is subservient to his welfare."¹

II. 2.—*He rested on the seventh day.*

"God according to the Persons is Eternal Work, but according to the Essence and Its perpetual stillness He is Eternal Rest."—RUYSBROECK.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

II. 8.—*And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed.*

In Dante's "Purgatorio" we read that "the penitents who have gone through all the seven Cornices, when they leave the last one, have to pass through the purifying fire, and then ascend by a lofty stair to the summit of the mountain. They here find

¹ "Genesis," p. 35.

themselves in the ancient Garden of Eden, the Terrestrial Paradise, which, lovely and deserted, has remained in its pristine beauty since the expulsion of our first parents, with its luxuriant herbage, with its spreading trees, whose leaves are gently moved by a warm and perfumed air, with its flowers of many colours and with its warbling birds." ¹

Milton says in Book IV of "Paradise Lost" :—

"Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world ; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
Of Eden strive."

The Mogul Emperors placed this inscription over their citadel at Agra :—

"If there is a paradise upon earth, it is here, it is here !"

Smike, in "Nicholas Nickleby," once the poor drudge of a Yorkshire school, passed away amid loving friends. "He fell into a light slumber, and waking, smiled as before ; then spoke of beautiful gardens, which he said stretched out before him, and were filled with figures of men, women, and many children, all with light upon their faces ; then whispered that it was Eden—and so died."

Dr. Livingstone was a born gardener, and grieved over the parting with his plot of cultivated ground at Mabotsa. "I like a garden," he wrote, "but Paradise will make amends for all our privations and sorrows here." He would have understood the longing of George Herbert :—

"Oh, that I once past changing were ;

Fast in Thy Paradise, where no flower can wither !"

II. 9.—*And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.*

Milton, in Book IV of "Paradise Lost," describes the approach of the Tempter to "delicious Paradise". The

¹ W. W. Vernon, "Readings on the Purgatorio," Vol. I, p. xxx.

Garden of Eden, in his vision, crowned with "enclosure green":—

"As with a rural mound, the champaign head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild
Access denied; and overhead up grew
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene; and as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view."

II. 9.—*The tree of life also in the midst of the garden.*

Dr. Livingstone thought of this verse when he found the wild fig-trees growing in the villages of inner Africa. "It is a sacred tree," he says in his Journal, "all over Africa and India, and the tender roots which drop down towards the ground are used as medicine—a universal remedy. Can it be a tradition of its being like the tree of life, which Archbishop Whately conjectures may have been used in Paradise to render man immortal? One kind of fig-tree is often seen hacked all over to get the sap, which is used as bird-lime; bark-cloth is made of it too. I like to see the men weaving or spinning, or reading under these glorious canopies, as much as I love to see our more civilized people lolling on their sofas or ottomans."

Milton represents Satan as sitting "like a cormorant" on the tree of life:—

"Yet not true life
Thereby regained, but sat devising death
To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only used
For prospect what, well used, had been the pledge
Of immortality."

II. 9.—*The tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*

The Bible itself has sometimes been regarded by the Church as the fatal tree of the Garden of Eden. Take, for instance, the remarks of the saintly Sub-Prior Eustace of Kennaquhair to Dame Glendinning in Sir Walter Scott's "Monastery". Father Eustace had spent an hour in self-reproachful prayer by the

death-bed of the widow of Walter of Avenel ; he had refused the refreshment offered by his hostess, and before quitting Glendearg, his chief care was to secure the mysterious "volume black," which the Sacristan Philip had taken away and which was restored to the children through the intervention of the White Lady.

"I may not," he said, "so far forget the living in my cares for the dead, as to leave behind me that book, which is to the ignorant what, to our first parents, the tree of knowledge of good and evil unhappily proved—excellent indeed in itself, but fatal because used by those to whom it is prohibited."

In Dante's "Purgatorio" (canto xxxii.) there is a reference to the legend that the Cross was an offshoot of the forbidden tree. The story is quoted in substance by Dr. J. S. Carroll from "The Golden Legend". "When Adam neared the end of life he sent Seth to the Angel at the gate of Paradise to beg for 'the oil of mercy'. The answer was that this could not be given till five thousand five hundred years had passed ; but he gave him a branch of the forbidden tree, with the assurance that when it bore fruit, his father would be whole. Seth planted it on his grave ; and when the Queen of Sheba on her way to visit Solomon saw it, 'she worshipped this tree, because she said the Saviour of all the world should be hanged thereon, by whom the realm of the Jews shall be defaced and cease'. To frustrate this doom, Solomon had it buried in the earth ; but afterwards the pool of Bethesda being formed on the very spot, the wood floated and was used to make the cross on which Jesus was nailed. Thus 'the cross by which we be saved, came of the tree by which we were damned'." ¹

II. 10.—*And a river went out of Eden to water the garden ; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.*

The River Spirits sing, in Mrs. Browning's "Drama of Exile" :—

"Fare ye well, farewell !
The river-sounds, no longer audible,
Expire at Eden's door.

¹ "Prisoners of Hope," pp. 470, 471.

Each footstep of your treading
Treads out some murmur which ye heard before.
Farewell! the streams of Eden
Ye shall hear nevermore."

In his poem "Rest," J. H. Newman says:—

"They are at rest:

We may not stir the heaven of their repose

By rude invoking voice, or prayer address

In waywardness to those

Who in the mountain grots of Eden lie,—

And hear the fourfold river as it murmurs by." ¹

"Fair is the fourfold river that maketh no moan,
Fair are the trees, fruit-bearing, of the wood,
Fair are the gold and bdellium and the onyx stone,
And I know the gold of that land is good."

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

II. 10-14.—In the cupola of the Ascension in St. Mark's Cathedral at Venice, the four Evangelists are placed on the vaults which support the angles of the cupola, because on their evidence, as Ruskin suggests, our assurance of the fact of the Ascension rests. "Finally, beneath their feet, as symbols of the sweetness and fullness of the Gospel which they declared, are represented the four rivers of Paradise, Pison, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates." ²

II. 15.—*And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*

"Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees
That half a gardener's proper work is done upon his knees.
So when your work is finished, you can wash your hands and
pray

For the Glory of the Garden that it may not pass away!
And the Glory of the Garden it shall never pass away."

—RUDYARD KIPLING.

II. 17.—*But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it.*

"For one restraint, lords of the world besides."—MILTON.

¹ "Lyra Apostolica."

² "Stones of Venice," Vol. II, ch. iv.

II. 18.—*It is not good that the man should be alone.*

THE TRILOGY OF EVE.

G. F. Watts, in his trilogy of Eve, represented the three stages through which human life has to pass. In the first, the newly created soul is more conscious of heaven than of earth, the hands are spread out, they grasp nothing of earth's treasures ; the foot alone is firmly planted.

In the second stage the sway of the senses has descended upon the soul, the figure is bowed, enmeshed, enthralled ; the head thrown back in a sort of abandonment to the overpowering scent of flowers and luscious fruit : the paradise of sense has developed a lower ecstasy. In the third—the Eve Repentant—all is changed, the earthly paradise is wrecked, and the agony of remorse is expressed by the attitude of the tragic figure.¹

II. 18.—*I will make him an help meet for him.*

Milton says in his picture of the holy pair in Paradise :—

“For contemplation he, and valour form'd ;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace ;
He for God only, she for God in him.”

II. 20.—*And Adam gave names to all cattle, etc.*

“Adam's naming of the animals in Paradise,” says Coventry Patmore, “was his vision of the nature, distinction, and purpose of each of his own instincts and powers ; for *he* was paradise.”²

II. 21-24.—On the last night of Luther's life (17 February, 1546) the talk at the supper-table at Eisleben turned on recognition in the future state. Luther said that just as Adam, through the enlightening Spirit of God, recognized Eve, when he awoke from sleep, as flesh of his flesh, even so and far more clearly will those who have been renewed in Christ recognize each other in heaven.³

THE FALL OF MAN.

Luther said : “How rich a God is our God ! He gives enough. But we do not heed this. He gave Adam the whole world ; that was nothing. He was only concerned about the

¹ “Life of G. F. Watts,” by Mrs. Watts, Vol. II, pp. 140, 141.

² “The Rod, the Root, and the Flower,” p. 29.

³ Köstlin-Kawerau, “Martin Luther,” Vol. II, p. 622.

one tree ; he had to ask why God had forbidden him to eat of it. So it is to-day. In His revealed word God has given us enough to learn. We leave that alone and search into His secret will, and yet we fail to learn it. It serves us right if we perish through such conduct.”¹

Elsewhere Luther said : “ Adam felt an incredible sorrow after he had lost that righteousness in which he was created by God. Even his bodily powers failed through too much care and anxiety of mind. I believe that he saw as clearly for a distance of 100 miles as we can see for half a mile, and so of all the senses. He must have said after the fall, ‘ Ah, God, what has befallen me ? How have I become deaf and blind ! Where have I been ? ’ I do not doubt that these things happened so.”²

III. 1.—*Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.*

In canto viii. of the “Purgatorio,” Dante describes the sly approach of the Serpent to the Dell of Princes :—

“ Upon that side on which the little valley
No barrier hath, a snake there was ; perchance
Such as did give to Eve the bitter food.
Through the grass and flowers came on the evil streak,
Turning now and then its head towards its back,
Licking like a beast that sleeks itself.”

“ The tempter comes,” says Dean Plumptre, “ on the side where there is no rampart, the weak defenceless side of what had been the soul’s besetting sin, among the green grass and flowers ”.

“ Some Arabs,” wrote Dr. Livingstone, “ believe that a serpent on one of the islands in the Nyanza Lake has the power of speaking, and is the same that beguiled Eve. It is a crime at Ujiji to kill a serpent, even though it enters a house and kills a kid.”

III. 1.—*The serpent . . . said unto the woman. . . .*

“ This was the villainy of the first schism of Lucifer ; who was not content to err alone, but drew into his faction many legions of spirits ; and upon this experience he tempted only

¹ E. Kroker, “ Luthers Tischreden,” No. 369. ² *Ibid.* No. 557.

Eve, well understanding the communicable nature of sin, and that to deceive but one was tacitly and upon consequence to delude them both.”—SIR THOMAS BROWNE.¹

III. 1-7.—When the evil angels decided to assault Mansoul, “it was determined that the giant Diabolus should assume the dragon, for that he was in those days as familiar with the town of Mansoul as now is the bird with the boy; for nothing that was in its primitive state was at all amazing to them”.²

III. 5.—*Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*

Mephistopheles, clad in Faust’s professorial gown, wrote these words in the album of a student who called upon him:—

“Eritis sicut Deus, scientes bonum et malum.”

III. 8.—*And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.*

When Boswell and Dr. Johnson visited Welwin, the home of Dr. Young, author of “Night Thoughts,” they saw on the outside wall of the summer-house these words, “Ambulantes in horto audiebant vocem Dei”.

III. 15.—*It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

Noorna, in George Meredith’s allegory, said: “What if I know of a sword that nought on earth or under resisteth, and before the keen edge of which all Illusions and Identicals are as summer grass to the scythe. . . . ’Tis in Aklis, in the mountains of the Koosh, and the seven sons of Aklis sharpen it day and night till the adventurer comes to sharpen it for his occasion. Whoso succeedeth in coming to them they know to have power over the sword, and ’tis then holiday for them. Many are the impediments, and they are as holes where the fox haunteth. So they deliver to his hand the sword till his object is attained, his Event mastered, smitten through with it; and ’tis called the Sword of Events. Surely with it the father of the Seven vanquished the mighty Roc, Kroojis, that threatened mankind with ruin, and a stain of the Roc’s blood is yet on the hilt of the sword.”³

In his “Postilla” for the first Sunday in Advent Melanchthon reminds us that the first Advent of the Son of God took place in

¹ “Religio Medici.”

² Bunyan’s “Holy War”.

³ Meredith, “The Shaving of Shagpat”.

the Garden of Eden. "The divine λόγος or Son of God Himself addressed Adam in the giving of the promise: The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. And while these words were proclaimed outwardly, the λόγος was working also within the hearts of Adam and Eve, and cheering them with His comfort, lest they should fall into everlasting death. In after ages this λόγος was always present in the Church, as Irenæus truly says. He spake with the Fathers and was with them in their heaviest conflicts. He was with Noah in the Ark, with Abraham in exile, with Joseph in prison, with Daniel among the lions."¹

III. 19.—*In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.*

"Whoso cuts a straight path to his own bread, by the help of God in the sun and rain and sprouting of the grain, seems to me an *universal* workman. He solves the problem of life not for one, but for all men of sound body."—Emerson to Carlyle.²

"The sweat of one's brow," wrote Dr. Livingstone in his "Journal," "is no longer a curse when one works for God; it proves a tonic to the system and is actually a blessing. No one can truly appreciate the charm of repose unless he has undergone severe exertion."

III. 19.—*Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

In the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom these words are used of the departed:—

"Give rest, O Christ, to Thy servants with Thy Saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting. Thou only art immortal, the Creator and Maker of Man; but we are mortal, formed of the earth, and unto earth shall we return: for so didst Thou ordain when Thou createdst us, saying: 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return'. All we go down to the dust. And weeping over the grave we make our song: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"

III. 24.—*He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way.*

In Dante's "Purgatorio," the angels who guard the Dell of Princes carry "flaming swords, truncated and deprived of their points".

¹ "Corp. Ref.," Vol. XXIV, col. 2.

² "Correspondence" 1883), Vol. I, p. 270.

Dr. Carroll writes: "As we are now nearing the Gate of Purgatory, the general idea is no doubt borrowed from the Cherubim at the Gate of Eden, and the 'flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life'. Of the blunted swords many interpretations have been suggested, as that they are for defence, not for attack; or that temptation is only scared away, not slain; or that since the atoning death of Christ, Divine justice is tempered with mercy. . . . On the whole it seems preferable to say that the broken sword is symbolic of the broken power of the Serpent; he is no longer so formidable that the perfect Sword is necessary. 'The battle is in truth already decided, the deadly thrust no longer needed, and the sword-edge alone is adequate.' This would agree with our Lord's express statements that the power of Satan is now broken, if not absolutely crushed: 'I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven'; and 'Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out'. It is the fulfilment of the ancient prophecy that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. It is to be noticed that he does not wait even for the pointless swords:—

"Hearing the green pinions cleave the air,
The Serpent fled, and round the Angels wheeled,
Back to their posts above flying in equal flight.'" ¹

THE STORY OF CAIN.

G. F. Watts carried the story of Cain and Abel in his thoughts for many years. "In his mind," writes Mrs. Watts, "a sort of epic grew up about this early record of crime, the brother's hand against a brother. He believed it to be a subject for a great cantata, and now and again tried to give shape to it in words; but nothing he wrote seemed to him adequate, and these remain only in fragmentary notes. In speaking of it, he once outlined the general idea in this way:—

"If I were a poet and musician like Wagner, I could make a fine cantata or oratorio of the subject. The first act would be to describe the innocence of the two brothers in their boyhood, the first shadow of the stain in the character of Cain just indi-

¹ "Prisoners of Hope," pp. 121, 122.

cated ; then, as the story grew, to mark the widening difference between them—the angelic guilelessness of Abel and the darkening of Cain’s heart through the sin of jealousy, the ever-increasing desire to make himself greater than Abel ending in the madness of his wrath and the murder of Abel. The denouncing spirits, as I have painted them, represent the voices of conscience reproaching him with the many sins that culminated in the murder. The brand is set upon him ; he is shut out from contact with all creation ; he has closed the avenue of sympathy with his fellow-men ; as he decides that they shall be unknown to him he becomes unknown to them. The brand, forbidding human vengeance (“No man may slay him”), constitutes the most terrible part of his punishment ; he is driven out from all contact with created things—unseen, unacknowledged, unknown. Not only are his fellow-men unconscious of his presence, but all animate nature has cast him out : no bird or living creature acknowledges his being. For him no bird sings, no flower blooms, evil passions haunt and follow him, making discords in his ear ; but all the while, one voice, as of an angel, is heard, and more and more prevails, until worn and weary nature can bear no more, and, surrendering to the Voice, he returns to Abel’s altar, there to give himself up a sacrifice ; and there the angel removes the curse and he dies forgiven. I should have liked to have made a sort of psychological study of it all, not only of Cain and of Abel, but of the human beings who passed by Cain during his term of isolation.’ ”¹

Carrying on the theme in his mind during several years, he painted a second picture called the “Death of Cain,” not exhibited until 1886. The angel in this design is seen removing the curse.

iv. 1-15.—The story of Cain and Abel is mentioned by Sir Walter Scott in Edward Glendinning’s confession to the Sub-Prior Eustace (in ch. xxxii. of “The Monastery”). Edward accuses himself of homicidal feelings towards his beloved brother Halbert, because they were rivals for the hand of Mary Avenel.

“‘It was by an effort (says Edward) that I saved myself from hating my kind and affectionate brother, who, all un-

¹ “Life of G. F. Watts,” Vol. I, pp. 258-9.

suspicious of my rivalry, was perpetually loading me with kindness. Nay, there were moods in my mind in which I could return that kindness for a time with energetic enthusiasm. Never did I feel this so strongly as on the night which parted us. But I could not help rejoicing when he was swept from my path—could not help sorrowing when he was again restored to be a stumbling-block in my paths.’

“ ‘May God be gracious to thee, my son!’ said the monk; ‘this is an awful state of mind. Even in such evil mood did the first murderer rise up against his brother, because Abel’s was the more acceptable sacrifice.’

“ ‘I will wrestle with the demon which has haunted me, father,’ replied the youth, firmly—‘I will wrestle with him, and I will subdue him. But first I must remove from the scenes which are to follow here. I cannot endure that I should see Mary Avenel’s eyes again flash with joy at the restoration of her lover. It were a sight to make indeed a second Cain of me! My fierce, turbid, and transitory joy discharged itself in a thirst to commit homicide, and how can I estimate the frenzy of my despair?’

“ ‘Madman!’ said the Sub-Prior, ‘at what dreadful crime does thy fury drive?’

“ ‘My lot is determined, father,’ said Edward, in a resolute tone; ‘I will embrace the spiritual state which you have so oft recommended. It is my purpose to return with you to Saint Mary’s, and, with the permission of the Holy Virgin and of Saint Benedict, to offer my profession to the Abbot.’ ”

iv. 14.—*Every one that findeth me shall slay me.*

For a parallel compare Doughty’s description of the wretched Harb Bedouin who had accidentally slain his antagonist at a wrestling-match. “None accused Aly; nevertheless, the ‘mesquin’ fled for his life; and he has gone ever since this armed, lest the kindred of the deceased finding him should kill him.”¹

iv. 17.—Cain’s wife.

Bishop King of Lincoln wrote to a young friend and pupil: “With regard to Cain’s wife, you are quite right in thinking

¹ Quoted by Principal Skinner, “Genesis,” p. 114.

that the Bible does not profess to contain a full account of everything. It is a guide Book for fallen man, pointing out the way back to eternal happiness. *The Way*—that is, Christ our Saviour.”¹

THE PATRIARCHS.

“The all-honourable senate of the Patriarchs.”—BISHOP LANCELOT ANDREWES.

“And let Thy patriarchs’ desire,
Those great grandfathers of Thy Church, which saw
More in the cloud than we in fire,
Whom nature clear’d more, than us grace and law,
And now in heaven still pray, that we
May use our new helps right—
Be satisfied, and fructify in me ;
Let not my mind be blinder by more light,
Nor faith by reason added lose her sight.”

—JOHN DONNE.

“My conviction is that we have the right even now to say that the patriarchs belong to historic reality. . . . The historical ground on which the patriarchs are among the principal figures is not a complete and uniform crystal, but it is a mountain-ridge in which we shall find many old deposits which form a permanent foundation of the earliest part of Israel’s historical memories.”—PROF. ED. KÖNIG OF BONN.²

The Book of Genesis was very dear to the Reformers, and there are frequent references to the patriarchs in their conversation and letters. One of the most interesting is contained in the New Year’s letter which Philip Melanchthon, then aged nearly 26, wrote to his friend Joachim Camerarius (aged 23). This is the first in the long series of intimate letters from Melanchthon, which Camerarius gave to the world. It is dated 1 January, 1523. The writer thus comforts Joachim, who was in family trouble: “If you know the riches of the Cross, you will easily overcome the greatest sorrows. And I doubt not

¹ “Spiritual Letters,” p. 4.

² “The Significance of the Patriarchs in the History of Religion,” “Expositor,” September, 1910.

that your courage will be stronger if you console yourself by the contemplation of those whom the heavenly Father has shown as on a stage before the gaze of all good men—in the history of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, to say nothing now of others. You would scarcely believe how much I am cheered when I am disturbed about anything by remembering their troubles. You see how good old Jacob lost his much-loved wife, and afterwards his son ! How bravely Joseph endured his hard servitude in Egypt, feeling undoubtedly (what is indeed true) that no kind of life is more remote from piety than that which lacks the cross." He bids Joachim remember that he is Christ's.¹

When Dr. Campbell of Kilninver, father of John McLeod Campbell of Row, died at a great age, Mr. Erskine of Linlathen wrote : " Few children have had so much enjoyment of a father as you have had of your patriarch. I think of him, as of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob ; he has been gathered to his fathers, and has left behind him a sweet memory of simpler times—of kindness and sincerity and ready protection ; a stranger and a sojourner too he always appeared to me, notwithstanding his many holds on humanity."²

THE AGES OF THE PATRIARCHS.

v. 3, etc.—Melancthon wrote on 12 July, 1542, to his sick friend, Frederick Myconius, pastor of Gotha :—

" I wonder you have not received the letter in which I noted the names of some long-lived people. But I must make up for the loss, and am now sending you a paper, in which I have written down the ages of certain persons, over which I think often and with pleasure, not from any wish for a prolongation of this sad life, but because they show that God cares for the Church, and that it is divinely guided and preserved. In the early world, the lives of the patriarchs and other illustrious men were prolonged in order that they might be witnesses to the teaching of the Church ; and we cannot but admire the line of succession.

¹ " Corp. Ref.," Vol. I, col. 597.

² " Memorials of John McLeod Campbell," Vol. I, p. 172.

The names of famous doctors go on in an almost unbroken sequence, from the beginning of the world down to the times of Augustine. Afterwards a dreary darkness followed—the ages in which Mahomet arose, and the Roman superstition gathered force in the West. The life of Paul, who fought so often with beasts, and was stoned so often, could not have been a long one, unless he had been preserved by the care of God.

“We live, therefore, not so much by our natural strength, as by providential ruling; and so I trust and desire that your life may be prolonged for the sake of your Church outside and at home.”¹

v. 24.—*And Enoch walked with God.*

“Enoch marchait avec Dieu; avant n’ eût rien valu.” (“Enoch walked *with* God; there would have been no merit in walking *in front*.”)—FRÉDÉRIC GODET.²

v. 24.—*And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.*

Mr. Canton, in his History of the Bible Society, tells how in July, 1884, the Society lost its young secretary, the Rev. C. E. B. Reed. “He had gone to the Engadine for the recovery of his voice. Accompanied by a friend on the 29th, he crossed the Morteratsch glacier, and while descending the rocky zigzag stairway which leads to Pontresina, he turned to take a last look and make some cheery remark to the guide. A slip—a false step—and in a moment he had fallen over the brink, and was flung from spur to spur, 150 feet into the gulf below. He had just completed his 39th year. His tour through the agencies as far as the Persian border had given him mastery of a large section of the work, and many years of usefulness seemed clear before him. He was laid to rest in the village cemetery at Pontresina, in view of the grassy slopes, the old Saracen tower shaded by pine-trees, the pinewoods climbing the sunny hills, and around and over all the snowy peaks he loved so dearly. On the day of his funeral a Bible in Hungarian which he had ordered for a Magyar lady, that she might search the Scriptures for herself, reached Pontresina. A simple cross of white marble was raised over his grave, and bore the text, ‘He walked with God: and he was not; for God took him’.”³

¹ “Corp. Ref.,” Vol. IV, col. 843. ² Letter of 10 April, 1837.

³ Vol. IV, pp. 191, 192.

Sir Thomas Browne remarks that "the man of God lives longer without a tomb than any by one, invisibly interred by angels, and adjudged to obscurity. Enoch and Elias, without either tomb or burial, in an anomalous state of being, are the great examples of perpetuity, in their long and living memory, in strict account being still on this side death, and having a late part still to act upon this stage of earth."

Henry Martyn wrote in his Journal (9 February, 1804): "At Church preached on 'Enoch walked with God'. O how much is contained in that text! What holy breathings of soul, what familiarity with God! What acquaintance with His ways!"

METHUSELAH.

v. 27.—*And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years : and he died.*

"There is not now that mankind which was then,
 When as the sun and man did seem to strive
 —Joint-tenants of the world—who should survive ;
 When stag, and raven, and the long-lived tree,
 Compared with man, died in minority ;
 When if a slow-paced star had stolen away
 From the observer's marking, he might stay
 Two or three hundred years to see it again,
 And then make up his observation plain ;
 When, as the age was long, the size was great ;
 Man's growth confess'd, and recompensed the meat ;
 So spacious and large, that every soul
 Did a fair kingdom and large realm control ;
 And when the very stature, thus erect,
 Did that soul a good way towards heaven direct.
 Where is this mankind now ? who lives to age
 Fit to be made Methusalem his page ?
 Alas ! we scarce live long enough to try
 Whether a true-made clock run right, or lie."

—JOHN DONNE.¹

The name of Methuselah was often in the thoughts of Sir Thomas Browne. John Addington Symonds remarked very

¹ "An Anatomy of the World."

truly that to the author of "Religio Medici" the extreme age of an opinion was some warrant for its truth. "In the Garden of Eden he walks as though he had been bred there, and reasons upon Adam's thoughts with the familiarity of one who shared his perplexities."

THE STORY OF THE FLOOD.

VI. 3.—*And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man.*

"Slip past, slip fast,
Uncounted hours from first to last,
Many hours till the last is past,
Many hours dwindling to one—
One hour whose die is cast,
One last hour gone.

Come, gone—gone for ever—
Gone as an unreturning river—
Gone as to death the merriest liver—
Gone as the year at the dying fall—
To-morrow, to-day, yesterday, never—
Gone once for all."

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.¹

VI. 4.—*There were giants in the earth in those days.*

"The Koran," says Principal Skinner, "has frequent references to the peoples of Ad and Thamud, primæval races noted for their giant stature and their daring impiety, to whom were attributed the erection of lofty buildings and the excavation of rock-dwellings, and who were believed to have been destroyed by a divine judgment."²

THE ARK OF NOAH.

Melanchthon frequently compared the story of the Ark with that of the ship Argo. Here is one of his public notices to his students dated 2 March, 1550 :—

"To-morrow, with God's aid, I shall begin to lecture on the Argonautic poem, which was written by Apollonius and was

¹ "The Prince's Progress."

² "Genesis," p. 140.

greatly admired. And I pray the Son of God that as He guided His Argonauts in the Ark of Noah, so He may now direct His ship in which we as rowers or boatmen are borne onwards amidst great dangers—in which may He in His mercy preserve us ! ”¹

“ In what torn ship so ever I embark,
That ship shall be my emblem of Thy ark.”

—JOHN DONNE.

VI. 14.—*Make thee an ark.*

De Quincey speaks of his happiness in the household of Mr. K—— at Manchester, where his brother and he lived in early boyhood. The family consisted of eight persons in all, including three young female servants.

“ The spirit of hope and the spirit of peace (so it seemed to me, when looking back upon this profound calm) had, for their own enjoyment, united in a sisterly league to blow a solitary bubble of visionary happiness—and to sequester from the un-resting hurricanes of life one solitary household of eight persons within a four months’ lull, as if within some Arabian tent on some untrodden wilderness, withdrawn from human intrusion, or even from knowledge, by worlds of mist and vapour.”

In later years misfortune fell on the prosperous merchant. He lost his wife and eldest child, and suffered heavy commercial disasters. “ At present and for many a year,” wrote De Quincey, “ I am myself the sole relic from that household sanctuary—sweet, solemn, profound—that concealed, as in some ark floating on solitary seas, eight persons, since called away, all except myself, one after one, to that rest which could only be deeper than ours was then.”²

VIII. 8.—*He sent forth a dove.*

“ It is not to be doubted,” says Auceps in “ The Complete Angler,” “ that the dove was sent out of the ark by Noah, to give him notice of land, when to him all appeared to be sea; and the dove proved a faithful and comfortable messenger. And for the sacrifices of the law, a pair of turtle-doves or young pigeons were as well accepted as costly bulls and rams. And when God would feed the prophet Elijah after a kind of

¹ “ Corp. Ref.,” Vol. VII, cols. 553, 554.

² “ Confessions of an English Opium-Eater.”

miraculous manner, He did it by ravens, who brought him meat morning and evening. Lastly, the Holy Ghost, when He descended visibly upon our Saviour, did it by assuming the shape of a dove."

VIII. 11.—*The dove came into him in the evening.*

"I remember to have read in some German work upon Hebrew antiquities, and also in a great English divine of 1630 (namely, Isaac Ambrose), that the Jews in elder times made two twilights, first and second; the first they called the dove's twilight, or crepusculum of the day; the second they called the raven's twilight, or crepusculum of the night."—DE QUINCEY.¹

VIII. 11.—*In her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off.*

The Rev. G. C. Fletcher, in his reminiscences of the youth of Bishop W. E. Collins, says that he conducted a Bible class for the elder lads at All Hallows, Barking. "I remember his remarkable experience coming out in his reply to one of them, who introduced a Bible difficulty—the shooting forth of the olive-tree after the Flood. 'Well,' said Willie, 'I remember perfectly well after the great flood in Spain in the year (whatever it was) that I saw with my own eyes that the olive was the first tree to show any leaves.'"

THE RAINBOW.

Jeremy Taylor compares our Lord Jesus Christ to the rainbow "which God set up in the clouds as a sacrament to confirm a promise and establish a grace. He was half made of the glories of the light and half of the moisture of a cloud. In His best days, He was but half triumph and half cloud."

The Jewish worshipper is instructed to give thanks on seeing a rainbow.

"You will observe," says Coleridge, "that there is no mention of rain previous to the Deluge. Hence it may be inferred that the rainbow was exhibited for the first time after God's covenant with Noah. However, I only suggest this."²

IX. 13.—*I do set my bow in the cloud.*

Henry Vaughan writes of the rainbow :—

¹ Note to "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater".

² "Table Talk."

“Still young and fine! but what is still in view
 We slight as old and soil'd, though fresh and new.
 How bright wert thou, when Shem's admiring eye
 Thy burnisht, flaming Arch did first descry!
 When Terah, Nahor, Haran, Abram, Lot,
 The youthful world's grey fathers in one knot,
 Did with intentive looks watch every hour
 For thy new light, and trembled at each shower!

Bright pledge of peace and Sunshine! the sure tie
 Of thy Lord's hand, the object of His eye!
 When I behold thee, though my light be dim,
 Distant and low, I can in thine see Him
 Who looks upon thee from His glorious throne,
 And mindes the Covenant 'twixt All and One.”

Carlyle wrote to Emerson from Annandale in 1838: “Surely no man has such friends as I. We ought to say, ‘May the Heavens give us thankful hearts!’ For, in truth, there are blessings which do, like sun-gleams in wild weather, make this rough life beautiful with rainbows here and there. Indicating, I suppose, that there is a Sun, and general Heart of Goodness, behind all that:—for which, as I say again, let us be thankful evermore.”¹

THE TOWER OF BABEL.

xi. 4.—*Let us build us a city and a tower.*

“The first tower of which we hear as built upon the earth (says Ruskin) was certainly built in a species of aspiration; but I do not suppose that any one will think it was a religious one. ‘Go to now. Let us build a tower whose top may reach unto heaven.’ From that day to this, whenever men have become skilful architects at all, there has been a tendency in them to build high; not in any religious feeling, but in mere exuberance of spirit and power—as they dance or sing—with a certain mingling of vanity—like the feeling in which a child builds a tower of cards; and, in nobler instances, with also a strong sense of, and delight in the majesty, height, and strength of the building itself, such as we have in that of a lofty tree or a peaked

¹ “Correspondence” (1833), Vol. I, p. 177.

mountain. Add to this instinct the frequent necessity of points of elevation for watch-towers, or of points of offence, as in towers built on the ramparts of cities, and, finally, the need of elevations for the transmission of sound, as in the Turkish minaret and Christian belfry, and you have, I think, a sufficient explanation of the tower-building of the world in general.”¹

XI. 1-9.—Alexander Smith has this suggestion:—

“Perhaps in the severe eyes of the gods the production of a wooden porringer, water-tight, and fit for household uses, is of more account than the rearing of a tower of Babel, *meant* to reach to heaven. Alas! that so many must work on these Babel towers; cannot help toiling on them to the very death, though every stone is heaved into its place with weariness and mortal pain; though when the life of the builder is wasted out on it, it is fit habitation for no creature, can shelter no one from rain or snow—but, towering in the eyes of men a *Folly* (as the Scotch phrase it) after all.”²

THE STORY OF ABRAHAM.

“According to the direct and indirect evidence of the historical sources, Abraham’s importance for the history of religion consists primarily in this fact, that within the Semitic branch of the human race to which he belonged he struck out a new and different religious direction.”—PROF. ED. KÖNIG.³

The Syrian Emperor Alexander Severus, nicknamed by the Greeks Archisynagogus, or Head of the Synagogue, expressed his eclectic friendliness to Judaism by placing in his private apartment a picture of Abraham next to those of Orpheus and Christ, and by causing the Jewish moral maxim, “Do not unto others what thou wouldst not that others did unto you,” to be engraven on the Imperial palace and on the public buildings.⁴

A guest at Luther’s table remarked that a general like Scipio would be the right leader against the Turks. The Doctor replied: “If only we had Abraham! He could send

¹ “Lectures on Architecture and Painting.”

² “A Summer in Skye.”

³ “The Significance of the Patriarchs in the History of Religion,” “Expositor,” September, 1910.

⁴ C. F. Abbott, “Israel in Europe,” p. 39.

4000 angels in advance, as he and his servants defeated four Kings. Ah, that was a great man and God's good friend." ¹

"How wonderfully beautiful," says Coleridge, "is the delineation of the characters of the three patriarchs in Genesis! To be sure, if ever man could, without impropriety, be called, or supposed to be 'the friend of God,' Abraham was that man. We are not surprised that Abimelech and Ephron seem to reverence him so profoundly. He was peaceful, because of his conscious relation to God; in other respects he takes fire, like an Arab sheikh, at the injuries suffered by Lot, and goes to war with the combined Kingdoms immediately." ²

Bishop Lightfoot preached on Abraham as "The Father of Missionaries" (Heb. xi. 8).

Frances, Baroness Bunsen, wrote that all her children knew and loved their Bible early. "My Ernest, when driving out with me in the carriage, would sing to himself the history of Abraham, or some other part, language and tune being alike an improvisation." ³

"The Hebrew patriarchs had small libraries, I think, if any," wrote Oliver Wendell Holmes, "yet they represent to our imaginations a very complete idea of manhood, and I think, if we could ask in Abraham to dine with us men of letters next Saturday, we should feel honoured by his company." ⁴

XI. 31.—*And Terah took Abram his son . . . to go into the land of Canaan.*

Frédéric Godet went to Berlin at the age of 26 as tutor to Prince Frederick William of Prussia. His mother had acted as governess to the royal child. On her departure he wrote to a friend, "I remember that God caused Abraham to be accompanied half way to Canaan by his father Terah; after that he had to travel onwards alone. But not *alone*; for He said to him at the same time, 'I will be with thee'. I am not an Abraham. But may my God be the God of Abraham, the God who provides for everything, even amidst the greatest sacrifices." ⁵

¹ E. Kroker, "Luthers Tischreden," No. 108.

² "Table Talk."

³ "Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen," Vol. I, p. 323.

⁴ "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table."

⁵ Life of F. Godet (1913), p. 134.

“God, who when Enoch from the earth was hidden,
 Saved him from death and Noë from the sea,
 Chose him a people for his purpose bidden,
 Found in Chaldaea the elect Chaldee.

God, who His promise through the ages keeping,
 Called him from Charran, summoned him from Ur,
 Gave to his wife a laughter and a weeping,
 Light to the nations and a son for her.”¹

“The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
 How Abram was the friend of God on high.”²

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.

“Man never truly believes until he is at some sacrifice for belief's sake. Before Abraham could become ‘the Father of the Faithful’ he had to turn his back on home and kindred, grip God by the hand, fare forth with Him into the unknown. So with Shibli Bagarag—he who deserted the ‘seasoned, sweet dishes of Shiraz,’ faced hunger, misery, peril in search of great things. Before you can enter any right path in life you must pay toll by an act of sacrifice. Always must there be the giving up of something in order to seek a better something; always also the agony of hope deferred in regard to that better something.”—JAMES McKECHNIE.³

XII. 1, 2.—*Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.*

Students of Reformation history know this passage as Reuchlin's farewell message to his grandnephew, Philip Melancthon, who was appointed, through Reuchlin's influence with the Elector Frederick the Wise, Professor of Greek at Wittenberg at the age of 21 (July, 1518). The call, once given and accepted,

¹ F. W. H. Myers, “St. Paul”.

² Burns, “The Cottar's Saturday Night”.

³ Meredith's Allegory, “The Shaving of Shagpat,” pp. 27, 28.

could not be revoked even at Reuchlin's earnest desire. A shadow rests upon the latter days of the great Hebrew scholar, which were spent at the Bavarian University of Ingolstadt. He wished Melanchthon to join him there and to forsake the cause of Luther, but his grandnephew, in an affectionate letter of March, 1520, declined the invitation. He had gone out of his own country in obedience to Reuchlin, and though he did not mention this in his letter, he already felt himself a fellow-worker with Luther in the Reformation.

XII. 7.—*There builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.*

St. John of the Cross notes that there are three kinds of places by means of which God is wont to stir the will towards devotion. He names first the scenes distinguished by natural beauty, warning his readers at the same time that the holy anchorites did not allow their senses to be carried captive by the loveliness of scenery, but built for themselves narrow cells and caves, and enclosed themselves therein.

To the second class belong those spots where God has shown special mercies to particular persons. Three examples of these are taken from the Book of Genesis: (1) Abraham built an altar in the place where God appeared to him (Gen. XII. 7) and when he came from Egypt, he returned by the same way, "unto the place of the altar which he had made there at the first; and there Abram called on the name of the Lord" (Gen. XIII. 4). (2) Jacob marked out the place where God appeared to him; holding up the ladder that reached to heaven, and there Jacob set up the stone on which he had slept for a pillow, and he poured oil on the top of it (Gen. XXVI. 18). (3) Hagar gave a name to the place where the angel appeared to her, "for," she said, "Have I also here looked after Him that seeth me?" (Gen. XVI. 13).

The third class consists of those places which God Himself selected for His worship, such as Mount Sinai, Moriah, and Mount Horeb.

"La causa porque Dios escoge estos lugares más que otros para ser alabado," adds the devout monk, "él se la sabe". (The reason why God chooses to be praised in these places more than in others is known to Himself.) "What it concerns us to

know is that all is done for our profit, and that He may hear the prayers we offer there, and in all places where we plead with sincere faith.”¹

xii. 13.—*Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister.*

Sir Walter Scott in “Kenilworth” reproves the misusers of this text. The wicked Varney arrives at Cumnor Place with instructions to the Countess of Leicester that she should consent to go to Kenilworth in the character of his own wife. Amy repudiates the suggestion with horror, and Varney turns for support to the hypocritical miser Anthony Foster, who remonstrates with the unhappy young lady.

“Foster here attempted to interfere with a face of authority, which he thought became the charge intrusted to him, ‘Nay, lady, I must needs say you are over hasty in this. Such deceit is not utterly to be condemned when practised for a righteous end; and thus even the patriarch Abraham feigned Sarah to be his sister when they went down to Egypt.’

“‘Ay, sir,’ answered the Countess; ‘but God rebuked that deceit even in the father of his chosen people, by the mouth of the heathen Pharaoh. Out upon you, that will read Scripture only to copy those things which are held out to us as warnings, not as examples!’”

xii. 16.—*He had . . . camels.*

The camel is highly honoured in Islam, which proclaims itself an Abrahamic religion. A recent traveller tells us of the carrying of the sacred carpet from Cairo to Mecca:—

“We now went into the courtyard, and the two very fine camels—in a way held sacred too—which are kept here solely for the purpose of conveying the Mahmal to Mecca, were brought out for us. They are of great size, and of the cream colour which distinguishes the finer breed of camels. The younger camel is kept in reserve, owing to the great age of the beast which has been to Mecca for a vast number of years, and is doubtless the most famous animal in the whole of the Islamic world.”²

xiii. 12.—*Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.*

¹ “Obras Espirituales,” Vol. I, pp. 268-70.

² S. H. Leeder, “Veiled Mysteries of Egypt”.

"Seest thou the dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Cast pale and dreadful?"¹

XIII. 18.—*And Abram moved his tent, and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre (R.V.).*

Dr. Andrew Bonar wrote, during his visit to America in 1881: "We came to what was the old street where Jonathan Edwards' house stood. The trio of great elm-trees in front of the house are remarkable in themselves. It was under these that the man of God and his wife used to sit so that the spot became like the oak of Mamre, God meeting them there; and in those days the ground all round was a grove of pines where Jonathan Edwards used to walk and pray."

XIV. 15.—*Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.*

This is the first mention in Scripture of the ancient Syrian city. Mr. Robert Hichens describes it as to-day "a garden city touched by the great desert. Under its roses one feels the sands. Beside its trembling waters one dreams of the trembling mirage. The cry of its muezzins seems to echo from its mosque towers to that most wonderful thing in nature which is 'God without man. . . .' It is the city of shade, of waters, of marble minarets and of roses. But it is also the great city of the desert. . . . Its spell is the spell of the desert and the spell of the oasis."

Mr. Hichens reminds us that Mohammed, when a camel-driver, looked at Damascus from the mountain, and refused to enter it, lest he should be content there to resign the glories of paradise. "The view of Damascus from the mountain where Mohammed made his great renunciation is one of the marvellous views of the world. Again and again I deserted the mosques, the bazaars, the marble baths, the courts of the fountains, and the gardens by the streams, for that bare height on which Abraham is said to have had the unity of God revealed to him."

"'Om el Denia'—Mother of the World—is the Arabic title of Damascus. That it was before Abraham—i.e. already an old

¹ Milton.

establishment much more than a thousand years before the siege of Troy, and than two thousand years before our Christian era—may be inferred from Genesis xv. 2; and, by the general consent of all eastern races, Damascus is accredited as taking precedence in age of all cities to the west of the Indus.”¹

xiv. 18-20.—*Melchizedek.*

“Melchizedek’s priesthood is not for sinners, as Aaron’s was, but to bless him who had received the promises; and so its main feature is benediction—benediction of the elect. It has nothing to do with inner or outer courts, or with blood, or with all those things which the Book of Leviticus so fully brings before us.”—ANDREW JUKES.²

xv. 7, 8.—*And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.*

St. John of the Cross comments as follows on this passage:—

“In Genesis God said to Abraham, when He had brought him to the land of Canaan, ‘I will give thee this land’. And when he had said so many times and Abraham was growing very old, and the land had not yet been given to him, Abraham answered the Lord when the promise had been yet again repeated, ‘Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?’ Then God revealed to him that not he himself but his children after four hundred years were to possess the land. Thereafter Abraham understood the promise, which in itself was most true, because when God gave the land to his children through love to Abraham, it was all the same as if He had granted it to himself.”³

xv. 11.—*And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abraham drove them away.*

St. Francis de Sales compared the wandering thoughts of vanity which pass over the minds of the saints to the birds which tried to peck at the sacrifice of Abraham. “What did he do? He drove them away with a branch which he waved to and fro above the offering.”

So Luther wrote:—

¹ Thomas De Quincey.

² “Letters,” p. 82.

³ “Obras Espirituales,” Vol. I, p. 116.

"You cannot prevent the birds from flying over your head, but you can prevent them from building nests in your hair."

xvii. 1.—*Walk before Me, and be thou perfect.*

St. John of the Cross in the "Ascent of Mount Carmel," names this verse among the messages of power divinely spoken to the soul, to which he applies the words of Ecclesiastes viii. 4, "Et sermo illius potestate plenus est," or as our version renders it, "Where the word of a king is, there is power". (R.V. "Because the king's word hath power".) In the Spanish such words as "palabras sustanciales," are distinguished from "palabras formales" because they have an immediate practical influence on the soul. "Thus God said to Abraham, 'Walk before Me, and be thou perfect,' and straightway he became perfect and walked ever afterwards as a worshipper of God. And such is the power of His word in the Gospel,—that word with which He healed the sick and raised the dead by the mere act of speaking it."¹

xvii. 13.—The words "My covenant shall be in your flesh" were used by Coventry Patmore as one of the mottoes of his small mystical work, "Rod, Root, and Flower," and were also chosen for his monument at Lymington.

xvii. 17; xxi. 5; xxiii. 1; xxiv. 67; xxv. 20.—The Rev. R. G. Livingstone, in describing Dean Burgon's readings on Genesis, remarks that by a comparison of the above texts he brought out a touching trait in the character of the Patriarch Isaac—his tender devotion to his mother's memory. "He showed that he was thirty-seven at the time of his mother's death, forty at the time of his marriage; and the tone of his voice as he read and commented on the final clause of the twenty-fourth chapter, 'Isaac was comforted after his mother's death,' revealing almost in spite of himself one of the deeper feelings of his own nature, still lives in my memory."

ISHMAEL.

xvii. 18.—*And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!*

Dr. Chalmers wrote: "One cannot but feel an interest in

¹ "Obras Espirituales," Vol. I, p. 172.

Ishmael—figuring him to be a noble of nature—one of those heroes of the wilderness who lived on the produce of his bow, and whose spirit was nursed and exercised among the wild adventures of the life that he led. And it does soften our conception of him whose hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him, when we read of his mother's influence over him, in the deference of Ishmael to whom we read another example of the respect yielded to females even in that so-called barbarous period of the world. There was a civilization, the immediate effect of religion in these days, from which men fell away as the world grew older.”¹

XVIII. 1.—*And the Lord appeared unto him by the oaks of Mamre (R.V.).*

Sir Walter Scott, in “The Monastery,” describes the entrance of the monks of Kennaquhair into the market-place of the village, to meet Murray and Morton at the head of their victorious troops. The monks were led by the Abbot Eustace, the noblest Churchman portrayed in the Waverley novels. “He was dressed in his habit of high solemnity, and appeared as much unconcerned as if he had been taking his usual part in some ordinary ceremony.” The monks assembled around the market-cross. “Close by the cross, of much greater antiquity, and scarcely less honoured, was an immensely large oak-tree, which perhaps had witnessed the worship of the Druids, ere the stately Monastery to which it adjoined had raised its spires in honour of the Christian faith. Like the Bentang-tree of the African villages, or the Plaistow-oak mentioned in White's ‘Natural History of Selborne,’ this tree was the rendezvous of the villagers, and regarded with peculiar veneration; a feeling common to most nations, and which perhaps may be traced up to the remote period when the patriarch feasted the angels under the oak at Mamre.”

XVIII. 17.—*Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?*

Patrick Walker loved those passages of the Old Testament in which holy men are chosen to understand the Divine secrets. Among the motto-verses for his “Remarkable Passages of the

¹ Quoted by Dr. John Brown in his Essay on Chalmers, in “Horæ Subsecivæ”.

Life and Death of Mr. John Semple, Mr. John Welwood, and Mr. Richard Cameron," he places first the words of Genesis xviii. 17, "And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" and he adds the words of Amos iii. 7, "Surely the Lord will do nothing, but He revealeth His secrets to His servants".¹

xviii. 25.—*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*

"When you hear of a death, say, 'Blessed is the righteous Judge!'"—"Talmud."

xix. 26.—Lot's wife.

"Now I saw (says Bunyan) that the pilgrims came to a place where stood an old monument by the highway side, at the sight of which they were both concerned, because of the strangeness of the form thereof, for it seemed to them as if it had been a *woman* transformed into the shape of a pillar. Here, therefore, they stood looking and looking upon it, but could not for a time tell what they should make thereof; at last Hopeful espied written above upon the head thereof a writing in an unusual hand; but he, being no scholar, called to Christian (for he was learned) to see if he could pick out the meaning; so he came, and after a little laying of letters together, he found the same to be this, 'Remember Lot's wife'. So he read it to his fellow; after which they both concluded that that was the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was turned, for her looking back with a covetous heart when she was going from Sodom for safety."

ISAAC AND ISHMAEL.

xxi. 3.—The birth of Isaac.

"Understand well that I do not disallow sorrow; it has its appointed time and work, but when that is over, let it go; it is a hireling and remaineth not in the house for ever; but the son remaineth ever; and the son is Isaac, a son of laughter."—DORA GREENWELL.²

xxi. 17.—*God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.*

Bishop Phillips Brooks wrote at the age of twenty-one:—

¹ "Six Saints of the Covenant," Vol. I, p. 180.

² "Two Friends."

“ Wholly deprecating any morbid weakness over the past, I still say that we are too much afraid to look the lives we have been living in the face. We are ashamed and shrink from owning and claiming our past selves. They have been weak and wicked, and we, whose their wickedness and weakness really are, have not the manliness to bear the shame. We turn with a shudder from the poor offspring of our lives and say with Hagar, Let me not see the death of the child. Oh, if we can only hear God’s angel calling, ‘ Fear not, for I have heard the voice of the lad where he is,’ ‘ Arise, lift up the lad, for I will make him a great nation,’ and we do arise and take our old poor weak lives in our hands and go forth to train them by God’s strength into richness and power.”¹

XXI. 19.—*And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water.*

According to Moslem tradition, the sacred well of Zem-Zem, at Mecca, is the identical well revealed to Hagar in the wilderness. “ The building,” says Mr. Augustus Ralli, “ consists of two chambers, in one of which is the mouth of the well, in the other vessels in which water is distributed. It is surmounted by a white cupola. A subterranean rivulet supplies the water in such abundance that in spite of unceasing demands during the pilgrimage, its level never sinks. For all its sacred associations, strangers never drink of Zem-Zem without making a wry face, and it frequently causes boils to break out on the body.” Burton described the flavour as “ a salt-bitter, much resembling an infusion of a teaspoonful of Epsom salts in a large tumbler of tepid water ”.

“ Providence

Sacred and secret hand !

By whose assisting, swift command
The Angel show’d that holy well,
Which freed poor Hagar from her fears,
And turn’d to smiles the begging tears
Of yong, distresséd Ishmael.”

—HENRY VAUGHAN.

¹ “ Life of Phillips Brooks, Vol. I, p. 188.

Dr. John Brown remarks : " There is something very beautiful and touching in the opening of this on Providence, and in the 'yong, distressed Ishmael' ".

THE OFFERING OF ISAAC.

The Ladies of the House Beautiful showed Christiana and her companions " the mount upon which Abraham our father offered up Isaac his son, and showed them the altar, the wood, the fire, and the knife ; for they remain to be seen to this very day. When they had seen it, they held up their hands, and blessed themselves, and said, Oh, what a man for love to His Master, and for denial to himself, was Abraham ! " ¹

XXII. 9.—*Abraham . . . bound Isaac his son.*

In the Jewish Prayer-Book compiled for the Hebrew congregations of the British Empire the words occur : " Let the binding (upon the altar) of (Isaac) an only Son appear before thee to the welfare of Israel ".

" Abraham, at the time of his immigration into Canaan (says Professor König) may well have been almost compelled at first to regard child-sacrifice as an act of the deepest devotion to God. For among the discoveries which have been made during the most recent excavations in Palestine the gruesome discovery of children's skeletons has been one of the most extensive. . . . But in this situation, where he was so tempted, the knowledge was made possible for the patriarch that his God did not desire to be worshipped by the actual sacrifice of children, but that for *this* God it was sufficient that man should carry within his soul the highest sacrificial capacity of disposition. Rightly, therefore, has this rejection of human sacrifice been described by several scholars of our own day as a cardinal principle, from the negative side, in the religion of Abraham." ²

J. M. Neale compares this chapter with the words of Haggai i. 8 : " Go up to the mountain and bring wood ".

" Our True Isaac carried the wood up that weary and yet most holy mountain. ' Behold the fire and the wood : but where is the lamb for a burnt offering ? ' Where ? ' And when Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished : and He

¹ John Bunyan.

² " Expositor," September, 1910.

bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.' There He left that most precious, most dear, most victorious wood; there He reigned, as it is written, 'on Mount Sion, and before His ancients gloriously'."

THE OLD AGE OF ABRAHAM—HIS CHOICE OF A
BURYING-GROUND.

"The saints, we observe, arose from graves and monuments about the holy city. Some think the ancient patriarchs so earnestly desired to lay their bones in Canaan, as hoping to make a part of that resurrection; and though twenty miles from Mount Calvary, at least to lie in that region which should produce the first-fruits of the dead."—SIR THOMAS BROWNE.¹

XXIII. 4.—*Give me a possession of a buryingplace with you.*

"He that looks for urns and old sepulchral relics," says Sir Thomas Browne, "must not seek them in the ruins of temples, where no religion anciently placed them. These were found in a field, according to ancient custom in noble or private burial; the old practice of the Canaanites, the family of Abraham, and the burying-place of Joshua, in the borders of his possessions; and also agreeable with Roman practice to bury by highways, whereby their monuments were under eye; memorials of themselves and mementoes of mortality unto living passengers; whom the epitaphs of great ones were fain to beg to stay and look upon them,—a language though sometimes used, not so proper in church inscriptions."

Prof. E. König remarks on this chapter:—

"In the dawn of the history of God's peculiar Kingdom, Abraham was guided to a particular land. But in the wider narratives about him and the other patriarchs it is an interesting point that the first and permanent piece of property they obtained in Canaan was a burying-ground, as we are told five times over in Genesis (Gen. xxiii. 17; xxv. 9; xxxv. 27; xlix. 30; L. 13). What a significant hint as to the true relationship which exists between the distinctive Kingdom of God and the earth! During their lifetime the patriarchs were merely

¹ "Urn-Burial."

strangers and pilgrims in Canaan (XLVII. 9), and it was only after their death that they found rest in the land of promise. This at least is certain, that the peculiar Kingdom of God, in which the true religion was to be settled, is raised even from its beginning *above* the earth, belongs to a higher realm and is subjected to a heavenly King, as we read in the triumph-song of Israel, 'The Lord shall reign'."¹

Dr. J. G. Paton's young wife died on the island of Tanna after the birth of her son in 1858. The bereaved husband was so entirely alone that he himself was obliged to dig the grave. In his Autobiography Dr. Paton wrote: "I built the grave round and round with coral blocks, and covered the top with beautiful white coral, broken small as gravel; and that spot became my sacred and much-frequented shrine, during all the following months and years when I laboured on for the salvation of these savage Islanders amidst difficulties, dangers, and deaths. Whensoever Tanna turns to the Lord, and is won for Christ, men in after-days will find the memory of that spot still green, where with ceaseless prayers and tears I claimed that land for God in which I had 'buried my dead' with faith and hope. But for Jesus, and the fellowship He vouchsafed me there, I must have gone mad and died beside that lonely grave!"

XXIII. 5, 6.—*And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us (margin, a prince of God).*

Melanchthon quoted this verse in February, 1546, in his address to the students of Wittenberg University, bidding them attend the funeral of Luther.

"As the children of Heth said to Abraham, 'princeps Dei es inter nos,' so Martin Luther was truly a prince of God among us. Let us therefore mourn that he has been called away from our companionship and let us pray the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, that He may mercifully preserve this Church." He bade the students assemble in the market-place and await the pastor (Bugenhagen) who would meet the coffin, following him afterwards when he had received "those mortal remains

¹ "Expositor," July, 1912.

which were and yet again shall be the tabernacle of the Holy Ghost".¹

THE STORY OF REBEKAH.

XXIV. 13, 14.—*Behold, I stand here by the well of water ; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water : And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink ; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also : let the same be she that Thou hast appointed for Thy servant Isaac ; and thereby shall I know that Thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.*

J. M. Neale made the following notes on this passage in an address at the reception of Sisters :—

“ ‘Let the same be she that Thou hast appointed for my master.’

“Let this Thy servant be she that Thou hast appointed for my master, the true Isaac, true Joy of heaven and earth : that during her probation shall continually strive

To love Him more,
To serve Him better,
To deny herself more thoroughly.

And, after this, that shall be taken into His tent for the rest of her mortal life.

“And finally have her portion with the hundred and forty and four thousand in the House not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

“The sign pointing out Rebekah as chosen for Isaac : her doing her work whole-heartedly.

“This, a chief duty of every Sister.

“On her doing, or leaving undone, or imperfectly done, one little action, turned the whole of Rebekah’s future life.

“No work so small that the right performance of it may not be all-important.”

XXIV. 13.—*Behold, I stand here by the well of water.*

A text chosen by Professor Whewell in preaching before the University of Cambridge.

XXIV. 16.—Rebekah at the well.

¹ “Corp. Ref.,” Vol. VI, col. 6.

“What girl
 Now reads in her bosom as clear
 As Rebekah read, when she sate
 At eve by the palm-shaded well?
 Who guards in her breast
 As deep, as pellucid a spring
 Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure?”

—MATTHEW ARNOLD.¹

XXIV. 49.—*And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me.*

J. M. Neale says on this passage:—

“That is a wonderful expression—‘If ye will deal *kindly* with my Master,’ as if He, once for us the Man of Sorrows, now equally for us exalted to the Right Hand of Power, vouchsafes to receive *kindness* from you. It reminds me of that expression in the parable, . . . the marriage being made *for the King’s Son*, as if the favour were received by Him, not by the bride. See how every act of ministering to the poor you do is an act of kindness to Him. . . . He accepts it as kindness when you give Him your thoughts. He accepts it as kindness when you are more than usually earnest in your prayers. . . . This Poor King that yet has all riches, this Man of Sorrows that yet has all joy, accepted the widow’s mite, and the handkerchief of St. Veronica no less than the gold and frankincense and myrrh from the Three Kings.”²

XXIV. 56.—*And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master.*

In the cemetery of Tübingen, the writer saw this text in the German Bible, inscribed on the tombstone of one of the clergy of the town, who died a few years ago.

XXIV. 58.—*Wilt thou go with this man?*

Carlyle quotes the words of the boy Hazlitt after hearing Coleridge, “I will go with that man”.³

XXIV. 59.—*And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse.*

¹ “The Future.”

² “Sermons on the Church Year,” Vol. I, p. 1.

³ “Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson” (1883), Vol. I, p. 190.

In Kingsley's "Hypatia," we read that Philammon, during the anti-Jewish riots at Alexandria, stood watching Raphael with dumb wonder, "and a shudder of regret, he knew not why, passed through him, as he saw the mob tearing down pictures and dashing statues to the ground. Heathen they were, doubtless; but still the Nymphs and Venuses looked too lovely to be so brutally destroyed. . . . There was something almost humanly pitiful in their poor broken arms and legs, as they lay about on the pavement. . . . He laughed at himself for the notion, but he could not laugh it away.

"Raphael seemed to think that he ought not to laugh it away; for he pointed to the fragments and with a quaint look at the young monk:—

" 'Our nurses used to tell us,

' If you can't make it,

You ought not to break it.'

" 'I had no nurse,' said Philammon.

" 'Ah—that accounts—for this and other things.' "

Mr. A. C. Benson writes of his old nurse "Beth," who died at a great age in 1911:—

"She was the first human being of whose love I was directly conscious, and her tender care has enveloped my whole life, as boy and man; the beloved nurse, and the dearest friend I have ever known or shall know. I mean to be better, purer, and simpler for her life and example, and with a sure and certain hope of reunion. Her spirit will find ours out, if she has to journey far to meet us; and I feel of her something of what John Wesley said of his friend Whitefield, when he preached what seemed to be erroneous doctrine, and some poor, carping disciple said to Wesley, hoping for a grim answer, 'Do you think, sir, that when we get to heaven we shall see Mr. Whitefield?' 'I doubt, sir,' said the old evangelist, 'for he will be so near the Throne, and we so far off, that we shall scarce get sight of him!'"

xxiv. 63.—*Isaac went out to meditate.*

Richard Baxter notes that "the Hebrew verb . . . signifieth both *adorandum et meditandum*". "The men of God, both former and later, who have left their meditations on record for our view, have thus intermixed soliloquy and prayer; sometime

speaking to their own hearts, and sometime turning their speech to God. And though this may seem an indifferent thing, yet I conceive it very suitable and necessary, and that it is the highest step that we can advance to in the work."

xxiv. 64.—Mrs. Smith Lewis has this note in her book, "In the Shadow of Sinai"—

"My sister thought that we had some illustrations in our daily life of Rebekah's action as described in Genesis xxiv. 64. We are told that on seeing Isaac she alighted from her camel, or rather, as the Hebrew has it, she 'fell from upon her camel'. This evidently means that she got off it suddenly, without waiting for the slow process of the driver coaxing it to kneel. The Bedawin constantly drop down in this way, but it is hardly a safe action for a woman in flowing raiment."

xxiv. 67.—*Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife.*

"There was no need to speak the rest—
No need to quiet any fears
Of her—who ask'd no reason why,
But turned on me her quiet eye!"¹

THE STORY OF JACOB (xxv. ff.).

xxv. 34.—*Thus Esau despised his birthright.*

Irving, in his "Life of Christopher Columbus," tells us that the Indians encountered on the first voyage were easily overreached by the discoverers. They would trade their curious ornaments of gold for glass beads and hawks' bills. On one occasion an Indian gave half a handful of gold dust for a toy, and no sooner was he in possession of it than he bounded away to the woods, looking often behind him, fearing lest the Spaniards might repent of having parted with such an inestimable treasure.

xxvi. 6.—*Isaac dwelt in Gerar.*

Isaac, in Coleridge's view, is a mere shadow of his father Abraham. "Born in possession of the power and wealth which his father had acquired, he is always peaceful and meditative; and it is curious to observe his timid and almost childish imita-

¹ Edgar Allan Poe.

tion of Abraham's strategy about his wife. Isaac does it beforehand, and without any apparent necessity."¹

xxvi. 18.—*And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father, etc.*

"The worthiest occupation of the wise, in these days, is to 'dig again the wells which the Philistines have filled'."—
COVENTRY PATMORE.

xxvii. 36.—*Is he not rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times.*

When Mr. Atterbury in "Esmond" brings Harry the confession of the dying Lord Castlewood, who acknowledges the young man's legitimacy, Harry is prepared for his message by the revelation already made to him by his patron.

"The priest put the paper into Esmond's hand. He looked at it. It swam before his eyes." He could not bear the thought of supplanting the boy Frank Castlewood.

" 'Tis a confession,' he said.

" 'Tis as you please,' said Mr. Atterbury.

"There was a fire in the room, where the cloths were drying for the baths, and there lay a heap in a corner, saturated with the blood from my dear lord's body. Esmond went to the fire, and threw the paper into it. 'Twas a great chimney with glazed Dutch tiles. How we remember such trifles in such awful moments!—the scrap of the book that we have read in a great grief—the taste of that last dish that we have eaten before a duel, or some such supreme meeting or parting. On the Dutch tiles at the bagnio was a rude picture representing Jacob in hairy gloves cheating Isaac of Esau's birthright. The burning paper lighted it up.

" 'Tis only a confession, Mr. Atterbury,' said the young man. He leaned his head against the mantelpiece; a burst of tears came to his eyes. They were the first he had shed as he sat by his lord, scared by this calamity, and more yet by what the poor dying gentleman had told him, and shocked to think that he should be the agent of bringing this double misfortune on those he loved best.

¹ "Table Talk."

“‘Let us go to him,’ said Mr. Esmond. And accordingly they went into the next chamber, where by this time the dawn had broke, which showed my poor lord’s pale face and wild appealing eyes, that wore that awful fatal look of coming dissolution. The surgeon was with him. He went into the chamber as Atterbury came out thence. My Lord Viscount turned round his sick eyes towards Esmond. It choked the other to hear that rattle in his throat.

“‘My Lord Viscount,’ says Mr. Atterbury, ‘Mr. Esmond wants no witnesses, and hath burned the paper.’

“‘My dearest master!’ Esmond said, kneeling down, and taking his hand and kissing it.

“My Lord Viscount sprang up in his bed, and flung his arms round Esmond. ‘God bl— bless —’ was all he said. The blood rushed from his mouth, deluging the young man. My dearest lord was no more. He was gone, with a blessing on his lips, and love, and repentance, and kindness, in his manly heart.”

XXVII. 38.—*Hast thou but one blessing?*

“That poor, unhappy and outwitted son of the Patriarch Isaac, who had in an evil hour sold his birthright for a miserable mess of pottage, cried with a loud and bitter cry, ‘Hast thou but one blessing, O my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father!’ Yes, the Eternal Father will bless the apparently rejected son. There is more than one blessing for the sons of men, however much they may have erred, whose inmost hearts utter this bitter cry. The Good Shepherd said, ‘I have other sheep which are not of this fold. Them also must I bring and they shall hear My voice’. *There I rest.*”—JOSEPHINE BUTLER.

In a letter written at the age of twenty to G. B. Loring, James Russell Lowell quoted the words, “Bless me, even me also, O my father!” and added, “What a passage in the Bible that is! I never could and never can read it without tears in my eyes. Esau was the favourite to my boyish mind, and is still. I had a fellow-feeling for him, for he was a careless, scatter-brained, uncalculating sort of a fellow, in which respect some others are born into the world like him.”¹

¹ “Letters of James Russell Lowell,” Vol. I, p. 44.

XXVII. 39.—*Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above.*

Baroness Bunsen mentions that Elizabeth Fry said, on taking leave of guests at her home, "May God bestow upon you His best gifts! the fatness of the earth is good, but the dew of Heaven is better".¹

XXVIII.—Frédéric Godet wrote during his tutorship of the future Emperor Frederick III and his companion Rudolf von Zastrow at the Prussian Court: "I tell them the story of the Old Testament. . . . We have got to Jacob's history. . . . That's the right food for children; I am surer of it than ever."²

JACOB'S LADDER.

XXVIII.—In William Blake's water-colour picture of Jacob's Dream, we see the youthful Jacob lying asleep on a grassy hill-top, his shepherd's crook in his hand. "Ending by his pillow and descending from a vast golden sun on high, whence emanate floods of bright yellow beams, is a white spiral stairway or ladder, upon which countless angels and girls and little children are passing up and down. Foremost among them is a winged angel bearing a basket of bread upon his head, and followed by a damsel with a jug of wine. Others are engaged in various delights; embracing one another, leading little children, one carrying a scroll, others a book, compasses, or a musical instrument—all joyful and beautiful. Beneath the rays of the sun is deep blue sky, star-spangled. Many of those for whom the symbolism of art is, as it was for Blake, inseparable from its reality, will be reminded in this lovely intention of the striking words in 'The Obscure Night of the Soul,' where St. John of the Cross tells of how the Ladder of Contemplation ascends to the Sun, which is God."³

Alexander Gilchrist notes that some of the angels lead children, "a very Blake-like touch". Children to Blake were not only "the flowers of London-Town," but also the flowers of Heaven-Town.

¹ "Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen," Vol. II, p. 83.

² Frédéric Godet, p. 130.

³ A. G. B. Russell, "The Letters of William Blake," etc., p. xxxi.

XXVIII. 11.—*He took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.*

John Hill Burton in his History of Scotland tells how King Edward I took away from the Abbey of Scone the Stone of Destiny—the palladium of Scotland. “It was enshrined in a chair or throne, on which the kings of Scots were wont to be crowned. Its legendary history was, that it was the pillow on which Jacob reposed when he saw the vision of the angels ascending and descending the ladder, and that it was brought over by Scota, that daughter of Pharaoh from whom the Scots line of monarchs was descended. In terms of a prophetic couplet, it was its virtue that wherever it might be placed there would the Scots be supreme; and it will easily be believed, that the prophecy was recalled, when in after-days the monarchs of the Stewart dynasty sat on it to be crowned in Westminster.

“King Edward was a serious prince, according to the notions of the age, and much given to relic-worship. He chose a spot sacred by its uses, and by the presence of his own household gods, for the reception of the great relic—the achievement of his sword and spear. It was in the chapel built by his father, containing the shrine of Edward the Confessor—where his loved Queen Eleanor and his father were buried, and where he then desired that his own dust should be laid. He intended at once to enclose the relic in a shrine, which should be the coronation chair of the kings. At first he gave orders for a chair of bronze, then altered his intention, and had it made in wood. Its cover or shrine thus being a seat or throne, altered and adorned from age to age, became the coronation chair of the kings of England.”¹

The saints of the Church, in all ages, have gathered at the foot of Jacob’s ladder.

The Ladies of the House Beautiful showed it to Christiana and her companions, and at that time “there were some angels ascending upon it. So Christiana looked and looked to see the angels go up: so did the rest of the company.”²

¹ Vol. II, pp. 172, 173.

² John Bunyan.

“ The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
 Angels ascending and descending, bands
 Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled,
 To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz,
 Dreaming by night under the open sky,
 And waking cried, ‘ This is the gate of heaven’ .”

So writes Milton in describing the journey of the lost Archangel between hell and earth.

Sir Thomas Browne remembered Jacob’s vision in his evening prayer, “ the dormitive ” he “ took to bedward ” :—

“ Guard me ’gainst those watchful foes
 Whose eyes are open while mine close.
 Let no dreams my head infest
 But such as Jacob’s temples blest.
 While I do rest, my soul advance :
 Make my sleep a holy trance.”

Aubrey de Vere wrote in early years, after a visit to Bath :—

“ I remembered what pleasure you had felt, as you told me, when, then a child, you were taken to see the Abbey Church at Bath, with that famous tower and its stone angels ascending the tower one above another, as if along steps of a ladder. Accordingly I went there. The day was a brilliant one, and Bath laughed in the sunshine as I looked down on it from an eminence. The hills, with which it is surrounded on almost all sides, were still sparkling, after the showers of the earlier morning, with the gladsome green of spring, while the vapours which rose from them were turned by the sunbeam showers to colours innumerable. I soon found your Abbey Church, your tower, and the stone angels still ascending their aerial ladder. Whatever those angels were intended to symbolize—whether the ascent of prayers, or mystically, the upward progress of the spiritualized affections towards celestial regions, along the graduated ladder of human ties—there they stood, and there they mounted. They evidently preferred the humbler service of their feet to that of their wings ; or as Wordsworth sings of the human affections, as illustrated by Jacob’s vision :—

‘ With untired humility forebore
 The ready wafture of the wings they wore.’ ” ¹

¹ “ Recollections,” p. 116.

xxviii. 16.—Bishop Francis Paget preached his last sermon as Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, from the words, “And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid.”

Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not.

In his first Birmingham speech in 1858 John Bright referred to his recent long and serious illness, and added: “In remembrance of all this, is it wrong in me to acknowledge here, in the presence of you all, with reverent and thankful heart, the signal favour which has been extended to me by the great Supreme”.

Dr. R. W. Dale, who was present, has recorded that “the hush which had fallen on the vast and excited assembly as soon as he began to speak deepened into awe. We had expected a fierce assault on the ‘obstinacy’ and ‘iniquity’ of what the orator afterwards described as ‘the fabric of privilege,’ but the storms of political passion were for a moment stilled; we suddenly found ourselves in the presence of the Eternal, and some of us, perhaps, rebuked ourselves in the words of the patriarch, ‘Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not.’”¹

xxviii. 17.—*How dreadful is this place.*

Miss Barrett wrote to Robert Browning in January, 1846: “I love you from the deepest of my nature—the whole world is nothing to me beside you—and what is so precious, is not far from being terrible. ‘How dreadful is this place.’”

xxviii. 17.—*This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.*

“I have seen (says Ruskin) over the doors of many churches the legend actually carved, ‘This is the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven’. Now, note where the legend comes from, and of what place it was first spoken. A boy leaves his father’s house to go on a long journey on foot, to visit his uncle: he has to cross a wild hill-desert; just as if one of your own boys had to cross the wolds to visit an uncle at Carlisle. The second or third day your boy finds himself somewhere between Hawes and Brough, in the midst of the moors, at sunset. It is stony ground, and boggy; he cannot go one foot farther that night. Down he lies, to sleep, on Wharnside, where best he may,

¹ G. M. Trevelyan, “Life of John Bright,” p. 270.

gathering a few of the stones together to put under his head ;—so wild the place is, he cannot get anything but stones. And, there, lying under the broad night, he has a dream ; and he sees a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reaches to heaven, and the angels of God are seen ascending and descending upon it. And when he wakes out of his sleep, he says, ‘ How dreadful is this place ; surely this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven ’. This *PLACE*, observe ; not this church, not this city, not this stone, even which he puts up for a memorial—the piece of flint on which his head was lain. But this *place* ; this windy slope of Wharnside ; this moorland hollow, torrent-bitten, snow-blighted ! this *any* place where God lets down the ladder. And how are you to know where that will be ? or how are you to determine where it may be, but by being ready for it always ? Do you know where the lightning is to fall next ? You *do* know that, partly ; you can guide the lightning ; but you cannot guide the going forth of the Spirit, which is as that lightning when it shines from the east to the west.”

Dr. Stoughton remarks that the most popular of Bishop Ken’s sacred lays—the Morning and Evening Hymns—were composed on the top of a hill near Longleat, which, from the prospect it commands through a break in the woods, is well known throughout the neighbourhood by the beautiful name of “ the Gate of Heaven ”.

xxviii. 19.—*He called the name of that place Beth-el.*

Bishop Edward King wrote from Oxford in 1876 : “ Last Term I started a little ‘ Bethel ’ in my garden ”. It was a meeting-room in which he gave addresses on week-night evenings.

The Bishop’s biographer, Mr. G. W. E. Russell, says : “ ‘ Bethel soon became perhaps the most important point, as it is the most endearing memory, of King’s work at Oxford. One who used to frequent it wrote thus of ‘ Dr. King’s Friday evenings ’ : ‘ We used to pass through the house into the garden behind, and there, guided by lamps placed near the ground, found our way to a building at the farther end (originally, I believe, a brew-house or washhouse), fitted up as a simple oratory. At the farther end was a sacred picture, and below, a faldstool and a harmonium. Dr. King came in, in surplice and

stole ; a hymn was sung heartily by all ; a few prayers said, and them came a simple, earnest address, the whole concluding with another hymn.' "

xxviii. 20-22.—*And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me.*

"The old Egyptians, the same Egyptians to whom Jacob afterwards went down, used to paint, on the corners of their houses and temples, a blue figure with outspread brooding wings. And why? They meant to represent the sky by it; that just as, wherever you go, the blue sky stretches itself out over you so God's care is always about and above us, and watches over us to keep us in all our ways." ¹

xxix. 16.—Leah and Rachel.

Roland Graeme, in Sir Walter Scott's "Abbot," says to Catherine Seyton, during the stay of the young lovers at Lochleven :—

" ' When I have toiled successfully to win that Leah, Honour, thou wilt not, my Catherine, condemn me to a new term of service for that Rachel, Love? ' "

" ' Of that,' said Catherine, again extricating her hand from his grasp, ' we shall have full time to speak ; but Honour is the elder sister, and must be won the first.' "

" ' I may not win her,' answered the page ; ' but I will venture fairly for her, and man can do no more.' "

xxx. 40.—*In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night.*

John McLeod Campbell wrote to his father in 1834 : " Oh ! it is a great undertaking to be the *pastor* of a people. To preach from time to time is comparatively an easy thing. In sunny summer weather it is easy to do the shepherd's part ; but in frost and snow and storms of wind and hail, it is no holiday work, nor in scorching heat either. And things corresponding to these conditions of the weather I may look for ; but Jacob kept sheep fourteen years for his two wives ; of which time he says that ' the sun wasted him by day, and the frost by night ' . Yet of the time he says that the years were as days because of the love with which he underwent his toil. It needs, then, but

¹ J. M. Neale, " Sermons in Sackville College Chapel," Vol. II, p. 1.

faith and hope to realize the day when the objects of present care will be a crown of joy and rejoicing to the faithful shepherd, and love to their souls in the meantime ;—and all will be cheerfully undergone.”¹

xxxii. 10.—*I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which Thou hast shewed unto Thy servant.*

“Maker and High Priest

I ask Thee not my joys to multiply,—
Only to make me worthier of the least.”

—MRS. BROWNING.

JACOB’S CONTEST WITH THE ANGEL.

xxxii. 24-32.—

“Weak Truth a-leaning¹ on her crutch,
Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost need,
Thy kingly intellect shall feed,
Until she be an athlete bold,
And weary with a finger’s touch
Those writhed limbs of lightning speed ;
Like that strange angel which of old,
Until the breaking of the light,
Wrestled with wandering Israel,
Past Jabbok brook, the livelong night,
And heaven’s mazéd signs stood still
In the dim tract of Penuel.”

—TENNYSON.

xxxii. 24.—Dr. John Brown wrote, soon after his wife’s death in 1864 :—

“I have been thinking much lately of Jacob’s wrestling with the Angel, finding his weakness and his strength at the same time, and going on through the rest of his life halting and rejoicing. I believe this is the one great lesson of life—the being *subdued by God*. If this is done all else is subdued, and won.”

xxxii. 26.—*Let me go, for the day breaketh.*

St. Bonaventura describes the Virgin Mary, “our aurora,” as the peacemaker between men and angels :—

¹ “Memorials,” Vol. I, p. 114.

"This is drawn from the story of Jacob's wrestling with the Angel, which meant discord between God, angels, and men; for man's sin was an offence to God; and therefore to all His creatures, especially to those nearest to Him. It was only in the dawn the discord was stilled—the Angel blessed Jacob in the *aurora*, and our *aurora* is Mary, who brought this blessing of peace. 'Assuredly then,' says Bonaventura, 'by the *aurora*, by Mary, men are made at peace with the Angels, whereby the choirs of Angels are made whole again'—that is, their ranks, broken by the Angelic fall, filled up by human souls redeemed through the Virgin's Son." ¹

"Weeping we hold Him fast, who wept
For us, we hold Him fast;
And will not let Him go except
He bless us first or last."

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

xxxii. 26.—*He said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.*

There was each morning during his first sojourn in the Soudan one half-hour during which there lay outside General Gordon's tent a handkerchief, and the whole camp knew the full significance of that small token, and it was most religiously respected by all, whatever was their colour, creed, or business. No foot dared to enter that tent so guarded. No message, however pressing, was carried in. Whatever it was, of life or death, it had to wait until the guardian signal was removed. Every one knew that God and Gordon were alone in there together.

xxxii. 26.—Heinrich Abeken, the secretary of Bismarck, and a servant much honoured by the German Imperial family, was a man of simple piety. He descended from a long line of burghers of Osnabrück. We are told that his great-grandfather had had a picture painted in his summer-house, of Jacob wrestling with the Angel, and the text beneath it was, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me". In the biography of Abeken edited by his widow, we are told that this text was a source of strength to him all his life. At the end we read, "A simple

¹ J. S. Carroll, "In Patria," p. 497.

green mound covers his grave, and beneath his name on the grey stone at the head is the text, 'I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me'".

xxxii. 26, 29.—Dean Inge writes in one of his Bampton Lectures on Mysticism:—

"Introspective mysticism had done its work—a work of great service to the human race. It had explored all the recesses of the lonely heart, and had wrestled with the angel of God through the terrors of the spiritual night even till the morning. 'Tell me now Thy name' . . . 'I will not let Thee go until Thou bless me.' These had been the two demands of the contemplative mystic—the only rewards which his soul craved in return for the sacrifice of every earthly delight."¹

xxxii. 28.—*As a prince hast thou power.*

The princeliness of certain natures is revealed in early years. Richard Rothe's school companions called him "the little prince". Henry Drummond's biographer says: "He was one of the purest, most unselfish, most reverent souls you ever knew; but you would not have called him saint. The name he went by among younger men was 'The Prince'; there was a distinction and a radiance upon him that compelled the title."

xxxiii. 4.—*Esau ran to meet him.*

The act of running is mentioned many times in Genesis. Dr. John Brown, in his essay on Dr. Chalmers, quotes these words from the "Daily Readings":—

"When a child is filled with any strong emotion by a surprising event or intelligence, it runs to discharge it on others, impatient of their sympathy; and it marks, I fancy, the simplicity and great naturalness of this period (Jacob's) that the grown-up men and women ran to meet each other, giving way to their first impulses—even as children do."

xxxv. 8.—*But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el under an oak; and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth (marginal reading, the oak of weeping).*

In the "Life of Archbishop Tait" the following tribute is paid to the nurses of great men:—

¹ "Christian Mysticism," p. 244.

"It is surely a fact worth noticing that three at least among the leading public men of our generation, Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Lawrence, and Archbishop Tait, have each of them, in recalling the main influences which helped to mould their lives, assigned a foremost place to the nurse of their early years. Maria Mills, Margaret Morse, and Betty Morton deserve one and all to be gratefully remembered by the English men and women of to-day. And, as Lord Lawrence's biographer has said, there are few ties more sacred and more indissoluble than those which unite the younger, ay, and the elder, members of a family to an old and trusted nurse. Witness it some of the most exquisite passages in all literature, from the time of Deborah the aged nurse of Rebekah, or Eurykleia the nurse and confidante alike of Telemachus and Penelope, right down to the 'Lord of the Isles' and the 'Lady of the Lake,' or, again, to Tennyson's 'Nurse of Ninety Years,' or, we may add, to Alison Cunningham, the heroine of Stevenson's touching poem."¹

Lady Frances Balfour writes in the Memoir of her sister, Lady Victoria Campbell :—

"The biographer of Archbishop Tait records what he owed to his old nurse, Betty Morton. . . . There are many families who, reading such words as these, or Robert Louis Stevenson's dedicatory lines to Alison Cunningham :—

'For all you pitied, all you bore,
In sad and happy days of yore :
My second mother, my first wife,
The angel of my infant life,'

recall at once what such lives of unselfish love and self-sacrificing service have been in their own time, and they form a beautiful background in their remembrance of early childhood."

Lady Frances Balfour tells that the Argyll children were specially fortunate in their good nurse, Elizabeth Campion. "She was a woman of a striking appearance. Her clean-cut, pale features were framed by two curls, secured by combs which projected from a close-fitting cap, which she was rarely seen without. She always wore, when dressed for the afternoon, a black silk gown, secured by a solid gold brooch, the pin of which effectually

¹ Vol. I, p. 50.

ally helped her charges to obey the admonishing word, 'Not to untidy me, there's ■ dear'. Within loose, hanging sleeves, she wore close-fitting ones of snowy lawn, and in this costume, which to nursery eyes was part of their 'Nana,' she would escort the children, one in her arms, and a troop around the ample spread of her skirts, downstairs to regions outside the nursery. . . . The ailing and suffering among the nurselings can recall the sleepless hours soothed by her vigil and ministration, Bishop Ken's evening hymn her lullaby, and the sound of her voice breaking the feverish unrest of pain, her kindly arms the protection from the terrors of the night."

Gilbert White of Selborne says :—

"Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, was buried under an oak; the most honourable place of interment probably next to the cave of Machpelah, which seems to have been appropriated to the remains of the patriarchal family alone."

THE OAK.

"It is probable," writes Moncure D. Conway in "Fraser's Magazine" for 1870, "that the sanctity of the oak antedates its ordinary uses in art. From the oracular oak of Dodona to the sacred oaks amidst which the Druids (*Gael*, druide, *Welsh*, derw, an oak) worshipped, it has been held profoundly sacred; and when Augustine came to bring Christianity to Britain, he sagaciously took his stand under that tree to make his appeal to Ethelbert. He might have claimed that it was as sacred among the Hebrew patriarchs as among the Saxons. The tree under which Abraham was said to have received his heavenly visitors, the 'oak of mourning,' under which Deborah was buried, the oak under which Jacob hid the idols at Shechem—the same probably with that near the sanctuary under which Joshua set up a stone—the oak of Ophra under which the Angel sat that spoke with Gideon, the oak on which Absalom hung, that under which the prophet sat at Bethel, that under which Saul and his sons were buried—all preceded the period when Isaiah had to rebuke those who carved idols from oak, and when Ezekiel proclaimed the wrath of Jehovah against the idols standing 'under every thick oak'. Yet the Hebrew name of the oak, *El*, suggests that of the Deity Himself. The oak of Finnish legends,

which ever grew stouter and harder the more it was cut, might be taken for a symbol of the strength with which the sanctity of the oak survived the efforts to destroy it in Judæa and in Europe. In the northern mythology we find all fairyland gathered at its roots."

xxxv. 21.—*And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar.*

"This tower of the flock, or tower of Edar, concerning which you read in the Book of Genesis that 'Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar,' stood close to the place where the Angels appeared to the shepherds on that first Christmas night: its grey old stones were then lighted up by that brightness,—its walls echoed to that first carol, 'Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men'. And since then, not it, but the Incarnation itself, has been the One Tower of the true flock; here we have our strength and defence, as well as our comfort and joy."¹

THE STORY OF JOSEPH (xxxvii. ff.).

"What a labyrinth there is in the story of Joseph! Able to convert a Stoick! Surely there are in every man's life certain rubs, doublings, and wrenches which pass a while under the effects of chance; but at the last, well-examined, prove the mere hand of God."—SIR THOMAS BROWNE.²

Dr. Livingstone wrote in his journal: "Mungo Park mentions that he found the Africans in the far interior of the west in possession of the stories of Joseph and his brethren and the like. They probably got them from the Koran, as verbally explained by some liberal Mullah, and showed how naturally they spread any new ideas they obtained; they were astonished to find that Park knew the stories."

Prof. George Wilson of Edinburgh wrote in 1844 from his retreat at Morningside:—

"I spent this forenoon reading the story of Joseph and his brethren, onwards to the end of Genesis. It is long since I read it through, and though no part of the Bible is better known to me, or more tenderly remembered in connexion with happy childhood (perhaps indeed for that very reason), it moved

¹ J. M. Neale.

² "Religio Medici."

me almost to tears. I felt the *hysterica passio*, the gulp in the throat, and should have fairly wept had I attempted to read it aloud. The dignity, simplicity, and pathos of the scene have never, I imagine, been excelled, and the wonderful way in which the old romantic story reveals God Himself shaping all its events to the most important but far-distant issues, and yet leaves the human interest in the tale to go forth unchecked by the awe or even sense of the supernatural, struck me to-day as it never did before. I spent two hours, which fled away, in reading the account and thinking over it, ending with the grand prophecy of Jacob as to the destinies of his descendants, which always seems to me to resound like the triumphal march of an army going forth conquering and to conquer."

"In Joseph the spirit opposed, and fettered and bound, conquers by passive power, and is at length exalted over all things. Joseph stands where Abraham falls. The ground which is a snare to mere believers, is none to patient sufferers. Suffering conquers that which tries our faith, and by it, and by it alone, the ground of sense is ruled at last."—ANDREW JUKES.¹

"The biography of Joseph is the most cheerful story in the world: it describes the successful career of a man of astonishing magnanimity. It is a very curious story. The moral interest is maintained to the end without the element of retribution. Everything goes right, but the wicked are not punished, neither does their wickedness entail any suffering upon the innocent. The philosophy of the writer was optimistic in the extreme, yet his view of life is not unreal. The murderous brethren go in fear of a vengeance which never descends; the torturing apprehensions of the father concerning his youngest son are turned to joy. Yet the reader is afraid for them both. Joseph's benefits towards his brothers never cease, nor to the sons and their sons' sons. The children of the wicked are 'brought up upon the knees' of the righteous. The whole conception of the story is perfectly original and designed to cheer at every point. The writer conceived of God as a power always overruling for good, 'high and lifted up' above the earthly craving for poetic justice."²

¹ "The Types of Genesis," p. 380.

² "The Spectator," 3 February, 1912.

xxxvii. 3.—*A coat of many colours.*

Andrew Jukes says in his mystical interpretation of Genesis : "If we walk with God in truth, and turn from evil, not afraid to rebuke it even among our brethren, a fair robe will soon be put upon us. . . . The 'many colours' will all be there, for colours are but the various shades and reflections of light, and he who walks in the light must needs reflect it, giving back each ray that is not lost and absorbed. For the priests, the garment was perfect white; and upon the Mount, One was seen 'whose raiment was shining so as no fuller on earth could whiten it,' but the many colours, if not so heavenly, may better reveal to human eyes the wondrous fullness which there is in light. The Josephs are yet thus adorned, and for this they are the more hated by their brethren who are not with Jacob."¹

xxxvii. 4.—*They hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.*

"Household envy is a household rat."²

JOSEPH'S DREAMS.

xxxvii. 5-9.—"Joseph's two dreams (says Ruskin) were evidently intended to be signs of the steadfastness of the Divine purpose towards him, by possessing the clearness of special prophecy; yet were couched in such imagery, as not to inform him prematurely of his destiny, and only to be understood after their fulfilment. The sun, and moon, and stars were at the period, and are indeed throughout the Bible, the symbols of high authority. It was not revealed to Joseph that he should be lord over all Egypt; but the representation of his family by symbols of the most magnificent dominion, and yet as subject to him, must have been afterwards felt by him as a distinctly prophetic indication of his own supreme power."

xxxix. 22.—*The keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison.*

Act III. of Charles Wells's drama, "Joseph and his Brethren," opens with these lines, spoken by the hero in prison :—

¹ "The Types of Genesis," p. 384.

² Charles Wells, "Joseph and his Brethren".

“There ever is a good side to be found
 Even in a man's bad fortune ; for that I
 Who am a prisoner and in disgrace,
 Do keep the keys, and am the gaoler here,
 Warder to mine own liberty and ease.
 Integrity surmounteth accident ;
 Its grief is pure, and mix'd with charity,
 Feeling for others more than for itself.”

XL. 1 ff.—“Revelations from the Lord,” says Andrew Jukes, “depend upon our state, and each receives the message which is best suited to him. The faithful sufferer has visions of glory, well understood ; Egyptians have visions of mercy or judgment, both awhile a riddle to them, till the elect, without fear or favour to either, interprets to each their deep and awful significance.”¹

XLI. 1.—*Pharaoh dreamed : and, behold, he stood by the river.*

Dr. Livingstone wrote in his diary of 1868, while he waited to set out for Ujiji :—

“The great men of antiquity have recorded their ardent desires to know the fountains of what Homer called ‘*Egypt's heaven-descended spring*’. Sesostris, the first who in camp with his army made and distributed maps, not to Egyptians only, but to the Scythians, naturally wished to know the springs, says Eustathius, of the river on whose banks he flourished. Alexander the Great, who founded a celebrated city at this river's mouth, looked up the stream with the same desire, and so did the Cæsars. The great Julius Cæsar is made by Lucan to say that he would give up the civil war if he might but see the fountains of this far-famed river. Nero Cæsar sent two centurions to examine the *Caput Nili*. They reported that they saw the river rushing with great force from two rocks, and beyond that it was lost in immense marshes.”²

XLI. 16.—*It is not in me : God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.*

“The Word of God
 Worketh its secret way, and needs no help.
 Like to a jewel (hid in desert sands)

¹ “The Types of Genesis,” p. 404.

² “Last Journals,” Vol. I, p. 338.

Of wondrous lustre, as creation old,
That finds its way into a nation's eye—
A matchless excellence of priceless worth—
So precious truth doth jewel the fair world,
Or, buried, sleeps unnoted but of God."

—CHARLES WELLS.

XL. 41.—*And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.*

"And he but filled his fortunes as a man
Who did intend to honour them as much
As they did honour him."

—CHARLES WELLS.

XL. 45 and XLVI. 20.—*The priest of On.*

"To-morrow," wrote Dean Burgon from Cairo in 1862, "we hope to pass at Heliopolis—the On of Genesis. The solitary obelisk which stands in the middle of it *was there in Joseph's time*, and it was there probably that Moses received his education. It is a most complete wilderness now, but one which seems to teem with mysterious life."¹

XLII. 24.—*And he turned himself about from them, and wept.*

Sainte-Beuve mentions that Jansen, notwithstanding the sternness of his nature, was bound by deep affection to his friend Saint-Cyran.

"After their separation in 1617, on receiving the first letter from his friend in presence of the young nephew Barcos and other witnesses, he was compelled, he said, to imitate the patriarch Joseph, and to go out or at least to refrain at the moment from reading to the end lest his tears should overflow."²

XLIII. 6.—*And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?*

Dean Burgon says that his friend, the Rev. C. P. Golightly of Oxford, often made striking and original remarks on passages of Scripture. "We were talking about the character and sayings of Jacob—so full of human pathos. 'Come, now' (said I),

¹ "Life of Dean Burgon," Vol. I, p. 310.

² "Port-Royal," Vol. I, p. 303.

‘tell me which you consider the most human of all his utterances’.

“Instantly—in a deep tone of mournful reproach which quite startled me—he exclaimed : ‘Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye *had* yet a brother?’”

XLIII. 23.—*And he (Joseph) said, Peace be to you, fear not.*

The greeting of the Book of Genesis is used throughout the Moslem world to-day. A recent traveller in the valley of the Nile says on this point :—

“As we rode about the country a good deal, we of course passed many men by the wayside, as well as in the villages. I was glad to find that they all returned my greeting ‘*Salaam Aleikum*’—‘Peace be with you,’ with the usual reply, ‘On you be peace’. This is the general form to be first given by the man riding on a camel to one on horseback ; by the horserider to the rider on an ass ; and by him to the man on foot ; by a man walking to a man sitting ; by a small party to a large one ; by the young to the old. Difference of rank does not enter into these general rules touching priority of salutation.”¹

XLIII. 30.—*He entered into his chamber, and wept there.*

“Blessed are they, Thou good Joseph, who love Thee even as Thou art ; who trust Thee in spite of Thy silence and Thy strangeness, Thy long delays, Thy repeated questionings, Thy withdrawal into Thy secret chamber, Thy protracted tarrying there. ‘Blessed is he who shall not be offended in Me.’”—DORA GREENWELL²

XLIV. 1.—*Fill the men's sacks with food.*

“We must be thankful if Joseph sustain our lives by relieving us in our famine with our provisions till we come to see His own face. There is joy in these remote receivings, but the fullness is in His own presence.”—RICHARD BAXTER.

XLIV. 12.—*The cup was found in Benjamin's sack.*

“We have now our mercies as Benjamin had Joseph's cup ; we find them at a distance from God, and scarcely know from whence they come, and understand not the goodwill intended in them, but are oft ready to fear they come in wrath, and think

¹ S. H. Leeder, “Veiled Mysteries of Egypt,” pp. 11, 12.

² “The Patience of Hope.”

they will but work our ruin. But when we shall feed at Joseph's own house, yea, receive our portion from his own hand; when He shall fully unfold His love to us, and take us to dwell in Goshen by Him; when we shall live in our Father's House and presence, and God shall be all in all; then we are indeed at home in rest."—RICHARD BAXTER.

XLV. 8.—*So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God.*

"If a man could have opened one of the pages of the Divine counsel, and could have seen the event of Joseph's being sold to the merchants of Amalek, he might, with much reason, have dried up the young man's tears, and when God's purposes are opened in the events of things, as it was in the case of Joseph, when he sustained his father's family and became lord of Egypt, then we see what ill judgment we made of things, and that we were passionate as children, and transported with sense and mistaken interest. The case of Themistocles was almost like that of Joseph; for being banished into Egypt, he also grew in favour with the king, and told his wife 'he had been undone, unless he had been undone'."—JEREMY TAYLOR.

XLV. 27.—*And they told him all the words of Joseph which he had said unto them.*

Luther wrote on this passage: "When Jacob heard that his son Joseph was a ruler in Egypt, like one awaking out of deep sleep he believed it not until the wagons sent by Joseph proved the truth of all his sons told him. Thus it would be indeed difficult to believe so great blessings are given us unworthy creatures in Christ, if He had not revealed Himself to His disciples in manifold ways and taught us also to believe by use and experience as if we saw the very wagons. A wagon bringing rich comfort it is that Christ has been made to us by God righteousness, sanctification, redemption, and wisdom. For I am a sinner, but I am borne in His righteousness given to me; I am impure, but His holiness is my sanctification wherein I sweetly ride; I am foolish, but His wisdom carries me; worthy of damnation I am, but His liberty is my redemption, a wagon most secure."¹

¹ Translation by Prof. McGiffert.

Charles Wells ends his drama, "Joseph and his Brethren," with these lines, spoken by the aged Jacob:—

"Benjamin, take my staff,
I'll lean upon thy brother: 'tis a bright day;
I said I would come down into the land,
See thee, and die—I would fain live a little."

XLVI. 3, 4.—*Fear not to go down into Egypt . . . and I will also surely bring thee up again.*

St. John of the Cross quotes the words, "Noli timere, descende in Aegyptum . . . et ego inde adducam te revertentem," and he adds that the promise was not fulfilled according as we might have expected. "For we know that good old Jacob died in Egypt, and never left that country alive; and the promise was accomplished in his children, who were led out of Egypt long years afterwards, the same God being their guide in the way."¹ The lesson is that there is danger in a too literal interpretation of the Divine promises, which are sure and true in themselves, though their meaning may not always lie on the surface.

XLVII. 29, 30.—*Bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying-place.*

"Grata quies patriae, sed et omnis terra sepulchrum."

These words, with which Sir Walter Scott closed his short biography of Leyden, are mentioned by Lockhart in reference to the last sad home-coming of Sir Walter to Abbotsford.

Goethe died on 22 March, 1832, "and the news seemed to act upon Scott exactly as the illness of Borthwickbrae had done in the August before". He heard the sad tidings at Naples. "His impatience redoubled; all his fine dreams of recovery seemed to vanish at once—'Alas for Goethe!' he exclaimed: 'but he at least died at home. Let us go to Abbotsford.'" And he quotes more than once in his letters the first hemistich of the line from Politian with which he had closed his early memoir of Leyden—"Grata quies patriae'."

XLVIII. 1.—*One told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick.*

Cardinal Newman wrote to Father Coleridge in 1864, when dwelling much on the thought of his own death:—

¹ "Obras Espirituales," Vol. I, p. 116.

"I wonder, in old times, what people died of. We read, 'After this it was told Joseph that his father was sick'. 'And the days of David drew nigh that he should die.' What were they sick—what did they die of? And so of the Great Fathers. St. Athanasius died past seventy—was his a paralytic seizure? We cannot imitate the martyrs in their deaths, but I sometimes feel it would be a comfort if we could associate ourselves with the great Confessor Saints in their illness and decline. Pope St. Gregory had the gout. St. Basil had a liver complaint, but St. Gregory Nazianzen? St. Ambrose? St. Augustine and St. Martin died of fevers proper to old age."¹

XLVIII.—*The blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh.*

Mr. A. C. Benson describes this chapter as one of the most perfectly beautiful things in the Bible. "Jacob, feeble, and spent, is lying in the quiet, tranquil passiveness of old age, with bygone things passing like dreams before the inner eye of the spirit—in that mood, I think, when one hardly knows where the imagined begins or the real ends. He is told that his son Joseph is coming, and he strengthens himself for an effort. Joseph enters, and, in a strain of high solemnity, Jacob speaks of the promise made long before on the stone-strewn hills of Bethel, and its fulfilment; but even so he seems to wander in his thought, the recollection of his Rachel comes over him, and he cannot forbear to speak of her: 'and as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan, in the way, and when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath; and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem.'

"Could there be anything more human, more tender than that? The memory of the sad day of loss and mourning, and then the gentle, aged precision about names and places, the details that add nothing, and yet are so natural, so sweet an echo of the old tale, the symbols of the story, that stand for so much and mean so little—'the same is Bethlehem'. Who has not heard an old man thus tracing out the particulars of some remote recollected incident, dwelling for the hundredth time on the unimportant detail, the side-issue, so needlessly anxious to avoid confusion, so bent on useless accuracy.

¹ Wilfred Ward, "Life of Cardinal Newman," Vol. II, pp. 77, 78.

"Then, as he wanders thus, he becomes aware of the two boys, standing in wonder and awe beside him; and even so he cannot at once piece together the facts, but asks, with a sudden curiosity, 'Who are these?' Then it is explained very gently by the dear son whom he had lost, and who stands for a parable of tranquil wisdom and loyal love. The old man kisses and embraces the boys, and with a full heart says, 'I had not thought to see thy face; and lo, God hath showed me also thy seed'. And at this Joseph can bear it no more, puts the boys forward, who seem to be clinging shyly to him, and bows himself down with his face to the earth, in a passion of grief and awe.

"And then the old man will not bless them as intended, but gives the richer blessing to the younger; with those words which haunt the memory and sink into the heart: 'The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads'; and Joseph is moved by what he thinks to be a mistake; and would correct it, so as to give the larger blessing to his first-born. But Jacob refuses. 'I know it, my son, I know it . . . he also shall be great, but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he.'

"And so he adds a further blessing; and even then, at that deep moment, the old man cannot refrain from one flash of pride in his old prowess, and speaks in his closing words of the inheritance he won from the Amorite with his sword and bow; and this is all the more human because there is no trace in the records of his ever having done anything of the kind. He seems to have been always a man of peace. And so the sweet story remains human to the very end."¹

XLVIII. 16.—*The Angel which redeemed me from all evil.*

When Luther set forth from Wittenberg in January, 1546, on the journey from which he did not return alive, Melancthon wrote to Justus Jonas: "May the eternal Word of the eternal Father, the Angel who guarded our doctor and leader Jacob on his wanderings, preserve also our Doctor Luther, and so guide the business at Mansfeld, that a sound and lasting peace may be established between the Counts."²

Luther had the great joy of reconciling the Counts of Mans-

¹ "The Thread of Gold" (4th ed.), pp. 144-6.

² "Corp. Ref." Vol. VI, col. 19.

feld, and the end came only a few hours after this last act of his patriotic career was accomplished. The Angel redeemed him from all evil; and he did not live to see the war which sent Melancthon into exile in November of the same year.

The saintly Puritan, Oliver Heywood, had two sons who devoted themselves to the work of the Christian ministry. A solemn domestic service of worship celebrated the event. One of the ministers read the forty-eighth chapter of Genesis, and when he came to the words, "The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads," tears stopped him; all wept. He says in prayer "God helped all"; and he adds, "God wrought strangely in my heart; oh, what a flood of tears, what pleadings with God! I can scarce remember the like." At night again they prayed, "sobbing and weeping," like David and Jonathan, "until David exceeded".

XLVIII. 16.—In the biography of Prof. George Wilson of Edinburgh we read that it was his mother's custom to pay each night a visit to the little cot of her two boys and repeat over them Jacob's blessing, "The God who fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel that redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads!" So fascinating was this to George that in mature years he told a friend how he used to lie awake watching for it, pretending to be asleep that he might enjoy it to the full. In the family, this blessing seemed, in consequence, set apart, as it were, to the two, and inseparably associated with them.

Prof. Wilson wrote long afterwards:—

"For the blessing of Jacob on Ephraim and Manasseh I have another and a more subdued feeling. Many a time, when I was a child, and in early youth, has mother invoked on my head and my twin brother's as we slept together the benediction, 'The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads'. That prayer has been answered in full for one of them, who bade me farewell some twelve years ago, in assured hope of a blessed resurrection, and the other rejoices to know that he is the child of many prayers."

JACOB'S BLESSING ON THE TRIBES.

"On St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662, the Nonconformist clergy who had not before taken leave of their flocks, uttered

their farewells. Thomas Lye, Rector of Allhallows, London, whose catechetical lectures had made him very popular with the youthful members of Puritan families, preached twice from the words—‘Therefore my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved’. Lye mentioned in his morning address, that he had been ejected on the 24 August, 1651, because he would not swear against the King. Now, on the 24 August, 1662, he was ejected for a very different reason. But he did not repine. ‘By way of exhortation,’ said the preacher, ‘I remember good Jacob when he was come into Egypt, ready to die, calls his children together, and before he dies, he blesseth his children. O beloved, I have a few blessings for you, and, for God’s sake, take them as if they dropt from my lips when dying. Whatever others think, I am utterly against all irregular ways; I have (I bless the Lord) never had a hand in any change of Government in all my life; I am for prayers, tears, quietness, submission, and meekness, and let God do His work, and that will be best done when He doth it.’”¹

XLIX. 10.—The single word “Shiloh” forms the subject of a large work published in 1904 by Dr. Adolf Poznanski.² The history of the exegesis of the passage in mediaeval and other literature is traced with scholarly care. We see that among the Jewish Rabbis in Spain, and in the hearts of devout men all over Europe, a profound meaning was attached to the words of the patriarch, “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come”.

XLIX. 31.—Dean Boyle says of Hartley Coleridge: “One thing more I must record, his intense feeling about the poetry of the Old Testament—the rhythmical beauty of certain passages. He dwelt on Jacob’s words, ‘There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, and there I buried Leah’. He also quoted the words of Ruth to Naomi, and the beautiful passage in the Gospel of St. Mark, ‘a parable of the fig-tree: When the

¹ Dr. Stoughton’s “History of Religion in England,” Vol. III, p. 274.

² “Schiloh: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Messiaslehre,” von Dr. Adolf Poznanski (Leipzig, Hinrichs).

branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near'." ¹

L. 1-14.—The burial of Jacob.

Principal Skinner notes that "the Egyptian practice of embalming originated in ideas with which the Hebrew mind had no sympathy—the belief that the *Ka* or ghostly double of the man might at any time return to take possession of the body, which consequently had at all costs to be preserved. . . . In the cases of Jacob and Joseph, it is merely an expedient for preserving the body till the burial could take place." ²

L. 15.—Bunyan says in "Grace Abounding," "I saw it was with me, as it was with Joseph's brethren; the guilt of their own wickedness did often fill them with fears that their brother would at last despise them".

L. 20.—*Ye thought evil . . . but God meant it unto good.*

John McLeod Campbell of Row was opposed by many of his brethren in the Church of Scotland because he taught that the Heavenly Father loved the whole human race, and sent His Son for the redemption of mankind. He wrote, after preaching to crowded congregations in the open air at Greenock: "Dear old Mrs. Campbell said that on the former Sunday, on the seeing the people hurrying from the chapel to the burying-ground, when it was understood that I was to preach, she was made to remember the words of Joseph to his brethren, as applicable to me with reference to the conduct of my brethren, 'But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive'." ³

¹ "Recollections of Dean Boyle," p. 122.

² "Genesis," p. 537.

³ "Memorials," Vol. I, p. 90.

THE BOOK OF EXODUS.

IN HONOUR OF MOSES.

"THE historic consciousness of Israel," says Prof. König, "possessed in the epoch-making deeds of Moses a new point of departure for the actual life of history."¹ The figure of the Law-giver has inspired the foremost artists of Europe, and his name is not less honoured as man of letters and soldier. Dr. Alexander McLaren never forgot his first sight of Michael Angelo's statue of Moses in the church of San Pietro in Vincoli, Florence : and his description sets the hero before us as he breathed and toiled.² G. F. Watts painted for Lincoln's Inn a grand fresco entitled "Justice—a hemicycle of lawgivers". He gave the central place to Moses, and represented him as head and shoulders above all others. He alone amongst the legislators has the uplifted head and face, as if he were listening to something higher than human argument.³

La Bruyère, in chapter 1. of "Les Caractères," names five great authors who were also great stylists: Moses, Homer, Plato, Virgil, Horace. On the name of Moses he has this note: "Even if we think of him only as a man who wrote," i.e. if we leave out of account the guidance of the Spirit of God.⁴

Napoleon, at St. Helena, proposed to write a history of the campaigns of Moses.

Dr. Livingstone was intensely interested in the career of Israel's leader, and longed to elucidate the life and work of that "man of transcendent genius". He wrote in his Journal in

¹ "Expositor," April, 1911.

² "Dr. McLaren of Manchester," by E. T. McLaren, pp. 94-7.

³ "Life of G. F. Watts," Vol. I, pp. 150, 151, by Mrs. Watts.

⁴ "Il faut exprimer le vrai," says La Bruyère, "pour écrire naturellement, fortement, délicatement."

1870: "My course has been an even one, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, though my route has been tortuous enough. All the hardship, hunger, and toil were met with the full conviction that I was right in persevering to make a complete work of the exploration of the sources of the Nile. Mine has been a calm, hopeful endeavour to do the work that has been given me to do, whether I succeed or whether I fail. The prospect of death in pursuing what I knew to be right did not make me veer to one side or the other. I had a strong presentiment during the first three years that I should never live through the enterprise, but it weakened as I came near to the end of the journey, and an eager desire to discover any evidence of the great Moses having visited these parts bound me, spell-bound me, I may say, for if I could bring to light anything to confirm the Sacred Oracles, I should not grudge one whit all the labour expended."

"Would the evening sky glow with a many-tinted, ever-changing play of colours if the sun had not gone down beneath the western horizon?"¹

Sara Coleridge wrote in 1837 of her little son Herbert; "I think Herby is more struck with Exodus than with Genesis, for the former is even more strikingly objective than the latter, and the account of the various plagues arrests the attention even of the youngest mind. The most objective passages in Roman and Greek history unfortunately are *not* the really important ones and the hinges of great events: they are biographical episodes or anecdotes for the most part: as the striking off the heads of the poppies, the death of Regulus, and much of what relates to Alexander, the Roman emperors and their private follies. But in the Old Testament a great battle is won by the Israelites because Moses sits upon a *stone* on a *hill*, and has his *arms held up* on either side by Aaron and Hur. The whole history is a series of pictures. If you make pictures of Roman history, you must imagine the postures, the accessory parts, all the detail of surrounding objects; but in the Bible they are made out for you."²

¹ Prof. E. König on Moses, "Expositor," April, 1911.

² "Memoirs and Letters of Sara Coleridge," Vol. I, p. 189.

ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

I.—Canon Liddon wrote from Luxor on January 28, 1886, to Dr. Bright:—

“One of the great pleasures of being in the East, as I find it, is the extraordinary relish, if I may use the word, which all that one does and hears gives to the Old Testament. The habits of the people, their whole bearing and aspect, suggest the Bible. Egypt, I suppose, is more Arab than it is Egyptian, the Oriental world is in full force. Hebrew reads more pleasantly here than in England; its simple, rich ideas seem in keeping with all around, just as the modern languages of Europe are more enjoyable in countries which talk them than in England, where an effort is necessary to enter into their spirit and genius. Here the Bible is enacted day by day before one’s eyes in its familiar features. Pharaoh’s daughters, generally *very* dirty, coming down to the Nile to wash; Israel in bondage in the peasant fellaheen, ‘watering the land with his foot,’ as Deuteronomy, I think, has it; the Patriarchs driving long processions of cattle of all sorts over the desert wastes of sand that here and there fringe the Nile for long intervals; Rebekah watering the camels, as well as the men. The very donkey-boys, whom we constantly employ in our visits to tombs at a distance from the river, when they are—as they often are—Copts, reproduce in a wonderful degree the very features of the Pharaohs, as given in their mummies in the Bulak museum. We call them Rameses, or Thothmes, or Sethi, or Menephthah, as the case may suggest.”¹

II. 3.—*She took for him an ark of bulrushes.*

Dr. Deissmann says: “When we consider the important part played by papyrus in the life of the ancient world, it is by no means surprising to find it mentioned in Scripture. The papyrus plant is spoken of in Job viii. 11 and Isaiah xxxv. 7; in the former passage the translators of the Septuagint use the word papyrus, and again in Job x. 16 (21) and Isaiah xix. 6. The ‘ark of bulrushes’ in which Moses was laid (Exod. ii. 3) was a small papyrus boat, like the ‘vessels of bulrushes’ in Isaiah xviii. 2. The writer of the Second Epistle of St. John mentions papyrus as a writing material, for the *chartes* referred to in verse

¹ “Life and Letters of Henry Parry Liddon,” p. 320.

12 was doubtless a sheet of papyrus. So too the books that Timothy was requested to bring with him to St. Paul (2 Tim. iv. 13) were no doubt made of papyrus, for they were expressly distinguished from the 'parchments'."¹

II. 24.—*God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.*

"One most interesting feature in the general character of Israel's historical writing is to be found in the *distinguishing of a period before Moses*. So we see that amidst all the splendour in which the Mosaic age shone forth as the period of Israel's youth (Hos. xi. 1; Jer. iii. 4) there was not any paling of that light which gleamed on Israel's memory from an age before the age of Moses. We find, on the contrary, that, notwithstanding the supreme greatness ascribed in these historical writings to the man whose glorious intervention brought about a vital change in the political and historical life of Israel, all honour is duly paid to Abraham and to Jacob as the founders of the national existence and of the people's religious mission."

—PROF. E. KÖNIG.²

III. 1.—*Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law.*

"What bard
At the height of his vision, can deem
Of God, of the world, of the soul
With a plainness as near
As flashing, as Moses felt
When he lay in the night by his flock
On the starlit Arabian waste?
Can rise and obey
The beck of the Spirit like him?"

—MATTHEW ARNOLD.³

III. 2.—*And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush.*

St. Bonaventura says that Angels are often compared to fire in Scripture (Exod. iii. 2; Cant. viii. 6; Ps. civ. 4, etc.)

¹ "Light from the Ancient East," pp. 26, 27.

² "Expositor," April, 1911.

³ "The Future."

on account of the fixed and steady motion by which Angelic love, like a fire that is never consumed, is moved towards God.

In France the pink hawthorn is called "l'arbre de Moïse," or "le buisson ardent".

J. Russell Lowell wrote: "We may reach our Promised Land; but it is far behind us in the wilderness, in the early time of struggle, that we have our Sinais and our personal talk with God in the bush".

III. 5.—*Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.*

The Rev. J. H. Harris, in his book entitled "Dawn in Darkest Africa," tells a story illustrative of this verse. His wanderings led him to one of the old crumbling Roman Catholic churches near the Gulf of Guinea.

"Visiting one of these ruins," he says, "we were struck by the pathetic reverence with which the natives regarded those crumbling walls; the priest had long since died, and there was none to lead those almost hopeless souls along the path of religious faith. Standing inside those four walls, gazing at the broken altar and the creeper-clad walls, we were forced to keep our heads covered, for the ruin had lost its roof generations before, and the equatorial sun was pouring its direct rays upon us. Directing a question to some of the natives standing near by, we were amazed to find that they refused to answer. A man close at my elbow then informed me that no native could reply whilst the white man kept his hat on his head in the House of God! The silent rebuke of those simple natives forced us to leave the precincts of the old ruin and pass into the little chapel, which still remains more or less watertight."

III. 17.—*I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt . . . unto a land flowing with milk and honey.*

John Bunyan closed the Preface to "Grace Abounding" with these words:—

"My dear children,

"The milk and honey are beyond this wilderness. God be merciful to you, and grant that you be not slothful to go in to possess the land."

IV. 2.—*What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.*

According to some ancient legends the rod of Moses was

created in the twilight of the first Sabbath, and therewith were wrought all of God's deeds subsequent to that time. According to a Mohammedan legend, the rod came into existence a little later, and was a branch of a myrtle-tree that grew in Paradise.¹

iv. 14, 15.—*Moses and Aaron.*

St. John of the Cross quotes this passage along with St. Matthew xviii. 20, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them," and Ecclesiastes iv. 10-12, "Woe to him that is alone when he falleth," etc.²

iv. 20.—*And Moses took the rod of God in his hand.*

That learned Jewish scholar, Israel Abrahams, in his paper "The Rod of Moses and its legendary story" has the following note: "Ordinary readers of Exodus see no valid reason for doubting that the Rod of Moses was the common shepherd's staff of wood with which he 'drove the flock to the back of the wilderness'. . . . Legend, however, noting that Moses on two separate occasions is reported to have struck rocks with his staff, forcibly enough to cleave them, infers that the rod must have been composed of some substance harder than wood, namely, of Sapphire, . . . ■ precious stone that ranks next to the diamond in hardness. The sapphire has always held a high position among magical stones; it was credited with important medicinal virtues, it improved the vision, enlightened the mind, and restored peace between foes. For this reason Issachar—reputedly studious—was represented in the breast-plate by the sapphire, and the little mist-like centre of the gem symbolizes the cloud which enveloped Sinai when the Law was given." The writer mentions that "Phoebus of old was believed to respond most readily to the prayers of his worshippers if the latter exhibited sapphires, the stone being regarded as a 'sign of control'. That the same estimate of the sapphire prevailed at a later period when these Midrashim received the final touches, is clear from the selection of this particular stone as the episcopal gem by Innocent III. in the twelfth century."

¹ Israel Abrahams, "The Rod of Moses".

² "Obras Espirituales," Vol. I, p. 140.

On the miracles wrought by Moses, Dean Church has these remarks: "The Call of Abraham and the miracles of Moses do not stand alone as separate alleged instances of Divine interposition; they are felt as steps and links in that train of working which went on till 'the Word was made flesh' and the Crucified arose from the dead. They belong to a system of things of which these last wonders are a part. On them is reflected from these latter a Divine character which separates them from all other things which could happen to men, not thus linked with the coming of God into our world."¹

VII. 11, 12.—*The magicians of Egypt.*

Caroline Fox noted in her "Journals" that Dr. Bowring [afterwards Sir John Bowring, editor of the "Westminster Review"], had seen the power exercised over serpents in Egypt precisely similar to that described in Exodus as exhibited by the magicians. "In a party he was at, a sorcerer declared, 'I can strike any of you dumb'; so one was selected who took his station in the centre of the group. With a wave of his hand the magician proclaimed, 'In Allah's name be dumb,' when the man writhed in apparent anguish, utterly unable to disobey the command. This effect he attributes (not to electro-biology) but to a feeling in the patient that it was the mandate of Allah, and that disobedience would be equally criminal and impossible."²

VII. 14.—*Pharaoh's heart is hardened.*

In Bunyan's "Holy War," one of the prisoners brought before the court appointed by the Prince was Mr. Hard-Heart.

"'Is there any reason in nature for these hard hearts?' O Lear That a reason out of nature must make them soft, seems clear."—ROBERT BROWNING.

VIII. 3.—*The plague of frogs.*

Gilbert White of Selborne compares the plague of crickets to the trouble caused in Egypt by the frogs.

"In families, at such times, they are, like Pharaoh's plague of frogs,—in their bedchambers and upon their beds, and in their ovens, and in their kneading-troughs."

VIII. 17.—*The plague of lice.*

¹ "Occasional Papers," Vol. I, p. 78.

² "Journals," Vol. I, p. 65.

"When God stretches forth His rod over the Egypt of the heart, what we thought was dust we find is lice."

—COVENTRY PATMORE.

x. 13, 14.—*The plague of locusts.*

Milton compared the multitude of evil angels to the swarms of locusts in the Egyptian plague:—

"As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Waved round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires."¹

x. 21-23.—*The plague of darkness.*

Gilbert White records that the summer of 1783 was an amazing and portentous one, and full of horrible phenomena. A peculiar haze, or smoky fog, prevailed for many weeks in our island and in every part of Europe and even beyond its limits. "The sun, at noon, looked as black as a clouded moon, and shed a rust-coloured ferruginous light on the ground, and floors of rooms; but was particularly lurid and blood-coloured at rising and setting. . . . The country people began to look with a peculiar awe at the red, louring aspect of the sun, and indeed there was reason for the most enlightened persons to be apprehensive; for all the while, Calabria and part of the isle of Sicily were torn and convulsed with earthquakes; and about this juncture a volcano sprung out of the sea on the coast of Norway."

xii. 2.—*This month shall be . . . the first month of the year to you.*

"He clung," says the biographer of Baron Bunsen, 'with affection to signs and seasons, and days and years, though not to the extent that would have degenerated into superstition; a date once marked by an event for good seemed to him a point round which all that was good or desirable might cluster for ever.'

¹ "Paradise Lost," Book I.

XII. 11.—*The Lord's passover.*

"When the pilgrims were returned out of the garden from the bath, the Interpreter took them, and looked upon them, and said unto them, 'Fair as the moon'. Then he called for the seal, wherewith they used to be sealed that were washed in his bath. So the seal was brought, and he set his mark upon them, that they might be known in the places whither they were yet to go. Now the seal was the contents and sum of the passover, which the children of Israel did eat when they came out from the land of Egypt; and the mark was set between their eyes. This seal greatly added to their beauty, for it was an ornament to their faces. It also added to their gravity and made their countenances more like them of angels."—BUNYAN.

XIII. 18.—*The children of Israel went up harnessed.*

In the ancient Syrian "Hymn of the Soul" these words are spoken by the prince who leaves his parents' home in quest of the Pearl:—

"Adamant harness was girded upon me stronger than iron;
But my Robe they took off wherewith their love had adorned
me,
And the bright Tunic woven of scarlet and wrought to my
stature."¹

XIV.—*The passage of the Red Sea.*

Zachariah Coleman in Mark Rutherford's story comforts his wife with these words amidst their heaviest troubles: "Jane, what is our religion worth if it does not support us at times like these? Does it not teach us to bow to God's will? Surely we, who have had such advantages, ought to behave under our trials better than those who have been brought up like heathens. God will not leave us. Don't you remember Mr. Bradshaw's sermon upon the passage through the Red Sea. When the Israelites were brought down to the very shore with nothing but destruction before them, a way was opened. What did Mr. Bradshaw bid us observe? The Egyptians were close behind—so close that the Israelites saw them: the sea was in front. The road was not made till the enemy was upon them, and then the waters were divided and became a wall unto them on their right hand and on their

¹ F. C. Burkitt, "Early Eastern Christianity," p. 218.

left; the very waters, Mr. Bradshaw remarked, which before were their terror. God, too, might have sent them a different way; no doubt He might, but He chose *that* way.”¹

XIV. 13.—In the darkest days of the American Civil War, Richard Oglesby, who was thrice elected Governor of Illinois, was at one time very much discouraged. When the Union armies were being steadily driven back, he sent a melancholy letter to the White House, in which he told the President that he thought all was lost. When the letter came, Abraham Lincoln sent this startling telegram to Springfield,—“Dear Dick: read Exodus xiv. 13: ‘Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord’.—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.”

XIV. 14.—*The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.*

There exists the undated fragment of a letter which Luther wrote to Melanchthon in 1521, immediately after he had been taken to the Wartburg. It contains this passage: “I have with difficulty obtained permission to send this, as they are so afraid lest it should in any way be made known where I am; wherefore do you, if you believe that these things are done for the glory of Christ, see to it that a doubt should either remain or arise as to whether I am in the keeping of friends or enemies: and be silent. For there is no need that others except you and Amsdorf should know anything more than that I am still alive. Who knows what God may be about to do in these high matters through this arrangement for my silence.—Behold the hand of the mighty One of Jacob (Gen. XLIX. 24) and how He works while we are silent, patient, prayerful. Is not that a true saying of Moses: ‘The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace’.”²

During the Diet of Regensburg in 1541, Luther wrote to Melanchthon: “I have received both your letters, my Philip, and though I am grieved to hear about the injury to your right hand, still I do not trust either your omens or my own. Our affairs are not directed by chance, but by a sure purpose—not our own indeed—but that of God alone. The Word has free course, fervent prayer ascends, hope endures, faith conquers, so

¹ “The Revolution in Tanner’s Lane.”

² Enders, “Luthers Briefwechsel,” Vol. III, pp. 146, 147.

that the fact is as clear as noonday, and were we not mere flesh we might sleep in peace, mindful of those words of Moses, 'The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace'. For even if we desire with most wakeful care to plan, say, and do everything in a different way; if God does not fight for us we shall wake in vain,¹ but if He fights we shall not sleep in vain. And it is certain that He does fight, and that slowly and step by step He is descending from His throne to that judgment for which we so earnestly long. Many indeed are the signs which persuade me of this."²

xiv. 15.—*Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.*

The soul's one road is forward.—GEORGE MEREDITH.

Carlyle wrote to Emerson in 1854: "You too have lost your good old mother, who stayed with you like mine, clear to the last; alas, alas, it is the oldest law of Nature; and it comes on every one of us with a strange originality, as if it had never happened before. Forward, however; and no more lamenting; no more than cannot be helped. 'Paradise is under the shadow of our swords,' said the Emir; 'Forward'."³

xv. 10.—*Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them.*

On the Elizabethan medal commemorating the defeat of the Spanish Armada these words were inscribed: "He blew with His wind, and they were scattered".

xv. 20.—*And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.*

"The going forth of the women of Israel after Miriam with timbrels and with dances, was (says Ruskin) their expression of passionate triumph and thankfulness, after the full accomplishment of their deliverance from the Egyptians. That deliverance had been by the utter death of their enemies, and accompanied by stupendous miracle; no human creatures could in an hour of triumph be surrounded by circumstances more solemn. . . . Con-

¹ Luther was perhaps thinking here of Psalm cxxvii. 1: "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain".

² "Luthers Briefwechsel," Vol. XIII, p. 299.

³ "Correspondence," Vol. II, p. 238.

sider what that seeing of the Egyptians 'dead upon the sea-shore' meant to every soul that saw it. And then reflect that these intense emotions of mingled horror, triumph, and gratitude were expressed, in the visible presence of the Deity, by music and dancing. If you answer that you do not believe the Egyptians so perished, or that God ever appeared in a pillar of cloud, I reply, Be it so—believe or disbelieve, as you choose;—This is yet assuredly the fact, that the author of the poem or fable of the Exodus supposed that, under such circumstances of Divine interposition as he had invented, the triumph of the Israelitish women would have been, and ought to have been, under the direction of a prophetess, expressed by music and dancing. Nor was it possible that he should think otherwise, at whatever period he wrote; both music and dancing being, among all great ancient nations, an appointed and very principal part of the worship of the gods."

xv. 23-7.—The palm.

As the traditional tree whose branches sweetened the bitter waters of Marah, as the festal boughs of the Feast of Tabernacles, as the title of Jericho, "City of Palms"—the palm became to the Jews an emblem of victory worthy to greet the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, and to be held in the hands of saints amidst the splendours of the New Jerusalem.—MONCURE D. CONWAY.¹

xv. 25.—*The Lord shewed him a tree.*

Dora Greenwell wrote these lines on the words, "The Lord hath showed us a tree":—

"Beneath Thy Cross I stand,
Jesus, my Saviour, turn and look on me!
Oh, who are these that, one on either hand,
Are crucified with Thee?

The one that turns away
With sullen, scoffing lip, and one whose eyes
Close o'er the words, 'Yet shalt thou be this day
With Me in Paradise'.

¹ "Fraser's Magazine," 1870, p. 600.

Here would I fain behold

This twofold mystery, Love's battle won,
Its warfare ended, and its ransom told,
Its conquest but begun !

I say not to Thee now,

Come from the Cross and then will I believe ;
*Oh, lift me up to Thee, and teach me how
To love and how to grieve.*

I tracked Thy footsteps long ;

For where Thou wert, there would Thy servant be ;
But now, methought the silence, now the throng,
Would part me still from Thee.

I sought Thee 'mid the leaves ;

I found Thee on the dry and blasted tree ;
I saw Thee not until I saw the thieves
There crucified with Thee !”

xvii.—“The mere opening of the sacred Book acted,” Mark Rutherford tells us, “as a spell on Zachariah Coleman. And when its heavy lids fell down on either side, the room cleared itself of all haunting, intrusive evil spirits. He read the seventeenth chapter of Exodus, the story of the water brought out of the rock ; and he thanked the Almighty with great earnestness for the favour shown him, never once expressing a doubt that he would not be successful. He was not mistaken, for Ogden had a place for him, just as good and just as permanent as the one he had left in London.”¹

xvii. 6.—*Thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.*

When King Richard, in “The Talisman,” grants with extreme reluctance the life of Sir Kenneth to his physician, Adonbec el Hakim, who is Saladin in disguise, the sage responds :—

“‘The bounty of the King hath filled my cup to the brim ; yea, it hath been abundant as the fountain which sprung up amid the camp of the descendants of Israel, when the rock was stricken by the rod of Moussa Ben Amran.’

¹ “The Revolution in Tanner’s Lane.”

“‘Ay, but,’ said the King, smiling, ‘it required, as in the desert, a hard blow on the rock ere it yielded its treasures. I would that I knew something to pleasure thee, which I might yield as freely as the natural fountain sends forth its waters.’”

“Moses striking the Rock” is a subject frequently treated in the art of the Catacombs. “Christ is the Rock, St. Peter is the Moses of the new law, and the water is that of baptism. In some cases, indeed, the name of Peter is written over what appears to be the figure of Moses.”¹

THE FIGHT WITH AMALEK.

XVII. 9-13.—Ruskin wrote to George Richmond in 1849: “By-the-bye, I have been to the Grande Chartreuse too—got wet going up, and couldn’t finish an argument I got into with one of the monks on the impropriety of his staying up there and doing nothing. He compared himself to Moses discomfiting Amalek by holding up his hands. I begged him to observe that Moses only came to that when he was too old to do anything else. I think I should have got the better of him, if it hadn’t been for the weather.”²

XVII. 11.—“We read that while, in the contest with Amalek, Moses lifted up his arms, Israel prevailed. Did Moses’ hands make war or break war? But this is to tell you that as long as Israel are looking upwards and humbling their hearts before their Father who is in heaven, they prevail; if not, they fall. In the same way you find (Num. xxi. 9), ‘And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it on a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived’. Dost think that a serpent killeth or giveth life? But as long as Israel are looking upwards to their Father who is in heaven, they will live; if not, they will die.”—TALMUD.³

XIX. 3.—*And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain.*

Caroline Fox visited Wordsworth in 1844, and walked with the aged poet on his Terrace, “whence the view is delicious”. The season was autumn, and he said, “Without those autumn

¹ W. R. Lethaby, “Cambridge Medieval History,” Vol. I, p. 605.

² E. T. Cook, “The Life of Ruskin,” Vol. I, p. 244.

³ Quoted in the “Quarterly Review,” October, 1867, p. 460.

tints it would be beautiful, but with them it is exquisite". Later on he remarked, "How constantly mountains are mentioned in Scripture as the scene of extraordinary events; the Law was given on a mountain, Christ was transfigured on a mountain, and on a mountain the great Act of our Redemption was accomplished, and I cannot believe but that when the poor read of these things in their Bibles, and the frequent mention of mountains in the Psalms, their minds glow at the thought of their own mountains, and they realize it all more clearly than others." ¹

MOUNT SINAI.

xix. 16-18.—Christian turned out of his way to go to Mr. Legality's house for help. "But, behold, when he was now got hard by the hill, it seemed so high, and also that side of it that was next the wayside did hang so much over, that Christian was afraid to venture farther, lest the hill should fall on his head; wherefore there he stood still and he wot not what to do. Also his burden now seemed heavier to him than while he was in his way. There came also flashes of fire out of the hill, that made Christian afraid that he should be burned. Here, therefore, he sweat and did quake for fear. And now he began to be sorry that he had taken Mr. Worldly Wiseman's counsel."—BUNYAN.

xx.—The Ten Commandments.

Phillips Brooks wrote in his private notebook in 1852: "The Ten Commandments based on the idea of liberty. 'Thus spake Jehovah who brought you out of the house of bondage,' and issuing in the injunctions of duty and righteousness, 'Thou shalt and thou shalt not'; so Liberty and Duty lie together here." ²

"The Bedawin firmly believe that the monks possess the two Tables of the Law, written by Moses, either built into the wall of the Chapel of the Burning Bush, or concealed in the ruins of the church on the top of Jebel Musa."—MRS. SMITH LEWIS.³

Mr. Herbert Paul says of Lord Acton: "He liked to hear

¹ "Journals," Vol. II, p. 42.

² "Life of Phillips Brooks," Vol. II, p. 366.

³ "In the Shadow of Sinai," p. 113.

all sides of a question and to make allowance for all errors which did not involve a violation of the moral law. Any apology, or even excuse, for departure from the highway of the Decalogue he regarded as in itself a crime."

Dean Burgon records the saying of one of the Exeter College Fellows about Hugh James Rose: "Never heard him read but once; and shall never forget it as long as I live. *It was the Ten Commandments.* Never heard anything like it. Never!" "I remarked to the speaker," adds the Dean, "that it is difficult to read the Ten Commandments with any special propriety; and asked him what it was that had so struck him. 'Oh,' was the reply, 'it was as if Mr. Rose had been personally commissioned to deliver the Decalogue to the congregation.'" ¹

Dr. Duff, the great Indian missionary, wrote during his Eastern travels in 1840: "This morning I retired to the summit of Sinai to hold communion with my God, and to remember in prayer those that are dear to me. I never had such a church before; for this is the Church where Jehovah Himself proclaimed the law to the thousands of Israel. And the very rocks now surround me that quaked and shook at that mighty voice. Oh, may we all find refuge from the thunders of Sinai beneath the Shadow of the Cross of Calvary. This is a solemn spot. This is a solemn day! And never in my life did I before read the *fourth* commandment with such peculiar emotion, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy'." ²

xx. 5.—*Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, etc.*

Thomas Erskine of Linlathen, as Dean Stanley mentions, was fond of dwelling on the passages in the Bible which bring out the overbalance of love and mercy as against vengeance and wrath. "'This,' he said, 'shows the right proportion of faith.' And one of these to which he often referred was the close of the second commandment, 'Visiting the sins of the fathers unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto—(not "thousands," as of individuals—

¹ "Twelve Good Men," Vol. I, p. 144.

² Dr. George Smith's "Life of Dr. Duff," Vol. I, p. 411.

but—) unto the “thousandeth and thousandeth generation”—(quoting the words of the Hebrew original)—*of them that love Me*’. I never read that part of the commandment without thinking of this saying and of the tones in which he uttered it.”

xx. 7.—*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.*

Vinet wrote: “Persons whose professional duty it is to talk religion ought to pray every morning to be kept from taking the name of God in vain”.

xx. 8.—*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.*

“The Jewish Sabbath,” according to Coleridge, “was commemorative of the termination of the great act of creation; it was to record that the world had not been from eternity, nor had arisen as a dream by itself, but that God had created it by distinct acts of power, and that He had hallowed the day or season in which He rested or desisted from His work. When our Lord arose from the dead, the old creation was, as it were, superseded, and the new creation then began, and therefore the first day and not the last day, the commencement and not the end, of the work of God was solemnized.

“Luther, in speaking of the *good by itself*, and the good *for its expediency alone*, instances the observance of the Christian day of rest,—a day of repose from manual labour, and of activity in spiritual labour,—a day of joy and co-operation in the work of Christ’s creation. ‘Keep it holy,’ says he, ‘for its use’ sake, both to body and soul! But if anywhere the day is made holy for the mere day’s sake,—if anywhere anyone sets up its observance upon a Jewish foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to feast on it—to do anything that shall reprove this encroachment on the Christian spirit of liberty.’ ”¹

When Phillips and Frederick Brooks were on a home visit, the one rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Philadelphia, and the other rector of St. Paul’s Church, Cleveland, their devout mother is recalled as putting her head into the doorway of the room from which the sound of merriment came, and saying “Boys, remember it’s Sunday ”.²

¹ Coleridge’s “Table Talk” .

² “Life of Phillips Brooks, Vol. II, p. 255.

In the Life of the three sisters of Lord Russell of Killowen,¹ there is a description of the Catholic observance of Sunday in Ireland in the middle of the nineteenth century. No cooking that might be done on Saturday was allowed. In the drive to Mass "how solemn and tidy everything was, while the calm that seemed to me to be over the whole country was like the sensible presence of God". "After dinner each of us had to read a chapter of the Bible aloud.

"It was part of the Lord's Day. The care and neatness required in and about the house in preparation for Sunday were in themselves useful lessons. The piano was never heard except it was to accompany a hymn, not a game of cards allowed, but all sorts of childish games, such as riddles, conundrums, stories, etc., made our evenings pleasantly cheerful."

"The Sabbath is to the Jew a day of joy. Something analogous to the German feeling for Christmas seems to connect itself with the kindling of the 'Sabbath lights'. [We wonder if the 'Grace for Light,' which Moira O'Neill speaks of as being said by Antrim peasants when the candles are lit has any connexion with the Jewish thanksgiving offered at the lighting of the Sabbath fire.] 'Come, my friend, to meet the bride; let us welcome the presence of the Sabbath,' we read in the service for 'the inauguration of the Sabbath'. A sense of festival takes hold of the reader as he follows the thanksgivings of a people probably always overworked, and calling, with a sense of delight, upon their God to 'accept our rest'."²

xx. 9.—*Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work.*

Bishop Gore remarked in 1912 to a conference of women workers at Oxford that to take down a concordance and look out a list of quotations under the heading of "Work" was an instructive task. It showed what an extraordinarily full and complete message there lay in the Bible with regard to work. It was God's final requirement from man.³

xx. 10.—*In it thou shalt not do any work . . . nor thy cattle.*

On Sundays Sir Walter Scott never rode—at least not until

¹ "The Three Sisters of Lord Russell of Killowen" (Longmans, 1912).

² "Spectator," 18 January, 1913, p. 93.

³ "Daily Chronicle," 5 October, 1912.

his growing infirmity made his pony almost necessary to him—for it was his principle that all domestic animals have a full right to their Sabbath rest.

xx. 12.—*Honour thy father and thy mother.*

No one obeyed this commandment more scrupulously than Charles Lamb. A letter to Coleridge, dated 2 December, 1796, gives us a glimpse of the trials he underwent to humour and amuse his father. "I am got home," he writes, "and after repeated games of cribbage, have got my father's leave to write awhile; with difficulty got it, for when I expostulated about playing any more, he very aptly replied, 'If you won't play with me, you might as well not come home at all'. The argument was unanswerable, and I set to afresh."

Li Hung Chang wrote in his diary:—

"This day I will seclude myself from all callers, in order that I may devote myself to thoughts of my celestial mother, who died fourteen years ago this day, and who for that long time has been thinking of my coming to the Peaceful Sunlight of the Nine Springs. With all the incidents of my life, its trials and lamentations, its moments of joy and pride, with all and every affair of life, I cannot forget my celestial mother and all she was and is to me.

"My father died many years before my mother, and his grave is great and hallowed. Many hundreds of times did my mother bless it and ask my father's spirit to hurry the time when her own might join his in the Happy Vale of Ancestral Longevity. My mother could never think of taking her own life. It is thought great and glorious to do such a thing by many of the ignorant—and many of the intellectual, too—but my father's beloved helpmeet could never think it was right, nor that it pleased the spirits of those gone before."

xx. 13.—*Thou shalt not kill.*

"'Non occides,' is the commandment of God, yet scarce observed by any man, for I perceive every man is his own Atropos, and lends a hand to cut the thread of his own days. Cain was not therefore the first murderer, but Adam who brought in death; whereof he beheld the practice and example in his own son Abel; and saw that verified in the experience of

another which faith could not persuade him in the theory of himself."—SIR THOMAS BROWNE.¹

xx. 24.—*I will come unto thee.*

Dr. Charteris heard a sermon from this text at Peebles after his almost fatal illness in 1903. He wrote in his diary: "After a long absence I was permitted to be at the Lord's Table to-day in a very crowded church. A year ago, and again six months ago, I had no thought of ever being at a Communion Table on earth again: even two months ago my life was supposed to be within a few days of the end. I felt thankful to be allowed to testify to the Saviour who deserves all my gratitude. I felt able to plead His promises to me, in the long time of silent prayer when the noiseless Communion was going on, and to plead His Covenant with me. Alas! mine with Him is sure to be broken. I cannot keep Him, but He can keep me, and He will. I felt as though Christ with His pierced hand gave me the broken bread to-day, and said, 'Poor disgraceful disciple, begin anew; Lo, I am with you alway, and I shall keep you.' Even so, come, Lord Jesus; come and do not go away. Lord, stay."²

xxi. 14.—*If a man come presumptuously . . . thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die.*

A verse that troubled Bunyan, and was compared by him with 1 Kings II. 27, 28, which tells how Joab was taken from the altar by King Solomon when he thought to find a refuge there. "These places did pinch me very sore; yet my case being desperate, I thought with myself, I can but die; and if it must be so it shall be said, 'That such an one died at the foot of Christ in prayer'."—"Grace Abounding."

xxiv. 10.—*And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone.*

Sapphire is the symbolic colour of the Eighth Heaven in Dante's Paradise. This is the heaven of the Blessed Virgin, "the sapphire beautiful"

With which the most clear heaven itself ensapphires," "perhaps (writes Dr. Carroll) in allusion to the blue mantle with the star on the right shoulder in which Christian art often clothes her. Or probably, there is here a reference to the 'Ave Maris Stella,' of the hymn, one mediaeval interpretation of

¹ "Religio Medici."

² "Life of Dr. Charteris," p. 471.

the Virgin's Hebrew name, Miriam, being 'Star of the Sea'. In the colour Dante appears to be thinking of the vision of God in Exodus xxiv. 10, 'and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness'. . . . The colour with which the sapphire star of Mary ensapphires this Heaven represents the knowledge of God, shed forth through her who in Bonaventura's words 'gave birth to the eternal ray'." ¹

xxviii. 30.—*And thou shalt put in the breast-plate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim.*

In one of his speeches of 1858, John Bright said: "We have experience, we have beacons, we have landmarks enough. We know what the past has cost us, we know how much and how far we have wandered, but we are not left without a guide. It is true we have not, as an ancient people had, Urim and Thummim—those oraculous gems on Aaron's breast—from which to take counsel, but we have the unchangeable and eternal principles of the moral law to guide us, and only so far as we walk by that guidance can we be permanently a great nation, or our people a happy people." ²

When some one asked Luther whether the Lord really answered the High Priest out of the sanctuary, he replied: "O yes! Nothing is more certain. And if He heard the prayer of the priest, a flame of fire went forth from God which was called Urim Thummim; this was the sign that the prayer had been granted. But if the flame was not seen, that was a sign that the prayer had not been granted." ³

xxxiii. 14.—*And He said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.*

Lady Victoria Campbell, the invalid daughter of the late Duke of Argyll, wrote in her diary on Sunday, 14 March, 1880: "Have felt that text, 'My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest,' has been ■ stay to me to-day, when feeling a sense of burden and shrinking from the London life in spite of its many church privileges." ⁴

¹ "In Patria," pp. 375, 376.

² Quoted by G. M. Trevelyan in his "Life of John Bright," p. 275 f.

³ E. Kroker, "Luthers Tischreden," No. 521.

⁴ "Memoir of Lady Victoria Campbell," pp. 139, 140.

xxxiii. 15.—*If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.*

“It is good that we desire of the King a convoy ; yea, that He will go with us Himself. This made David rejoice when in the Valley of the Shadow of Death ; and Moses was rather for dying where he stood than to go one step without his God. Oh, my brother, if He will but go along with us, what need we be afraid of ten thousands that shall set themselves against us ? but without Him the proud helpers ‘fall under the slain’.”—BUNYAN.

xxxiii. 18.—*And he said, I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory.*

Alfred Tennyson used to say towards the end of his life : “My most passionate desire is to have a clearer vision of God”.¹

xxxiv. 6, 7.—*And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, ff.*

St. John of the Cross quotes this passage in his “Ascent of Mount Carmel” (chapter xxvi.) where he seeks to show that the souls to whom are granted high and singular visions of God have not been able to express their knowledge except in common and general terms. “We read of Moses,” he says, “that in the profound knowledge God granted of Himself when He passed before him, Moses could only express himself in this ordinary and general language.” He made haste and bowed himself to the earth, saying, “Lord, Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands”. And although at times words are uttered when such knowledge is granted, the soul sees well that it has spoken nothing of what it felt, because there is no language which would suffice to express it. And so when St. Paul was granted that high vision of God, he did not say anything about it except that of such things it was not lawful for man to speak.²

xxxiv. 29.—*Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.*

“Let thy face, like Moses’, shine to others, but make no looking-glasses for thyself.”—JEREMY TAYLOR.

xxxiv. 30, 33.—*And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone ; and*

¹ “Tennyson and his Friends,” p. 305.

² “Obras,” Vol. I, pp. 152, 153.

they were afraid to come nigh him. . . . And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face.

Mr. W. W. Vernon quotes this passage in illustrating Dante's experience when the Angel Pilot approached over the sea towards the Mount of Purgatory, with his boat-load of blessed souls:—

"Then as more and more the Divine Bird drew on towards us, the more radiant did he appear; so that my eye endured him not near; but I cast it downwards; and he approached the shore with a little vessel, swift and light, so much so that the water swallowed naught of it."

xxxv. 22.—*And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered offered an offering of gold unto the Lord.*

Frances Ridley Havergal wrote in August, 1878:—

"The Lord has shown me another little step, and of course I have taken it with extreme delight. 'Take my silver and my gold' now means shipping off all my ornaments (including a jewel cabinet which is really fit for a countess) to the Church Missionary House, where they will be accepted and disposed of for me. I retain only a brooch or two for daily wear, which are memorials of my dear parents; also a locket with the only portrait I have of my niece in heaven, my Evelyn; and her 'two rings,' mentioned in 'Under the Surface'. But these I redeem, so that the whole value goes to the Church Missionary Society. I had no idea I had such a jeweller's shop, nearly fifty articles are being packed off. I don't think I need tell you I never packed a box with such pleasure."

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS.

LEVITICUS.

LUTHER wrote on 3 November, 1522, to Spalatin: "In translating the Old Testament I have only got as far as Leviticus. You would hardly believe how I have been hindered up to the present by letter-writing, business, social engagements, and many other matters. But now I have decided to shut myself up at home and to hurry forward so that by January the Books of Moses shall go to press. For we shall publish these separately, following with the Histories, and last of all the Prophets. The size and cost of the books obliges us to divide them and bring them out gradually."¹

XI. 9, 10 (with Deut. xiv. 9, 10).—*These shall ye eat of all that are in the waters, etc.*

Izaak Walton remarks that "Moses appointed fish to be the chief diet for the best commonwealth that ever was". It has been pointed out, however, that Moses merely told the members of the "best commonwealth" what fish it was lawful for them to eat, and what fish they should not touch.

XI. 18 (with Deut. xiv. 16).—In our Authorised Version there is more than one reference to "the swan".

In Leviticus xi. 18 we read among the names of unclean birds "the swan, and the pelican, and the gier eagle".

The Revised Version translates: "the horned owl and the pelican and the vulture".

In Deuteronomy xiv. 16 there is a reference to "the little owl and the great owl and the swan".

Revised Version: "The little owl and the great owl and the horned owl".

¹ Enders, *Luthers Briefwechsel*," Vol. IV, p. 23.

Patrick Fraser Tytler, in his "History of Scotland" (Vol. I, p. 205) describes the banquet at which King Edward I pledged himself to the overthrow of the Scots. "He and his companions proceeded to the banquet, at which two swans, ornamented with golden network, emblems in those days of constancy and truth, were brought in. Upon their being placed on the table, the King rose and made a solemn vow to God and to the Swans, that he would set out for Scotland, there revenge the death of John Comyn, punish the treachery of the Scots, and afterwards embark for the holy war, with the resolution to die in Palestine."

XI. 29.—*The tortoise after his kind.*

Gilbert White of Selborne wrote affectionately about the tortoise. In a letter dated 21 April, 1780, he says:—

"The old Sussex tortoise that I have mentioned to you so often is become my property. I dug it out of its winter dormitory in March last, when it was enough awakened to express its resentment by hissing; and packing it in a box with earth, carried it eighty miles in post-chaises. The rattle and hurry of the journey so perfectly roused it that, when I turned it out on a border, it walked twice down to the bottom of my garden; however, in the evening, the weather being cold, it buried itself in the loose mould, and continues still concealed." . . . "This creature not only goes under the earth from the middle of November to the middle of April, but sleeps through part of the summer; for it goes to bed in the longest days at four in the afternoon, and often does not stir in the morning till late. Besides, it retires to rest from every shower; and does not move at all in wet days."

XIII., XIV.—*Leprosy.*

Gilbert White of Selborne says: "In all ages the leprosy has made dreadful havoc among mankind. The Israelites seem to have been greatly afflicted with it from the most remote times, as appears from the peculiar and repeated injunctions given them in the Levitical law. Nor was the rancour of this foul disorder much abated in the last period of their commonwealth, as may be seen in many passages of the New Testament. Some centuries ago this horrible disorder prevailed all Europe over; and our forefathers were by no means exempt, as appears by the large provision made for objects labouring under this

calamity. There was a hospital for female lepers in the diocese by Lincoln, a noble one near Durham, three in London and Southwark, and perhaps many more in or near our great towns and cities”.

xiv. 53.—*But he shall let go the living bird out of the city into the open fields.*

James Vaughan, in one of his sermons to children, applies this text very beautifully to the Ascension of our Lord.

“The two birds,” he says, “make a picture of Jesus. The ‘dead bird’ is Jesus dying on the cross; the ‘living bird’ is Jesus going up into heaven.”

xvi. 22.—*The goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.*

Christina Rossetti wrote to Frederic Shields: “I have lately been struck by an idea (but am not aware of any authority whatsoever for it—it may be a mere fantastic error) whether the two goats of the great Day of Atonement taken together may not stand as one type of our Blessed Redeemer—the slain goat, His Sacred Body slain for our sins; the scape-goat, His Soul sent all alone into the desolate desert world of the departed, and bearing our sins as in Isaiah LIII. 10. Not that the unseen world of the elect really was at any moment of man’s history a desolate desert; yet till our Lord entered it, it was an unknown land fearful to flesh and blood, fearful even to saints, if we may judge by some Old Testament utterances, as of Job or in the Psalms.”¹

xix. 18.—*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

Swedenborg exclaimed: “My reward for loving my neighbour as myself will be that I shall come to love him more than myself”.

¹ “Life and Letters of Frederic Shields,” p. 270.

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS.

IN the Book of Numbers we have gleams from older literary sources, admitted by the chronicler, for the historical books of Israel which exist to-day. Prof. König, in a recent paper,¹ points out that the first of these ancient original documents is "The Book of the Wars of Jahveh" (Num. xxi. 14), "an account of the conflicts which were waged under the invisible leadership of the Lord, and for the glory of His name". He quotes the verdict of Edward Meyer: "It was only among the Israelites and Greeks that true historical literature had an entirely independent origin," and these other words of the great historian on Israel's early annals: "The one and only analogy is found on the soil of Greece. Because of its history, the Israelite civilization, alone amongst all others, takes rank from the very beginning as on an equal plane with that of Greece." Prof. König recognizes in Numbers passages which were probably taken from a second original document, "The Book of the Upright" (Josh. x. 13 and 2 Sam. i. 18), a book which glorified with poetic lustre deeds or model types of the ideal Israelite. This book, he thinks, may very probably have contained poetical texts such as those which are scattered amidst the narratives on the earlier times: e.g. the song of the well ("Spring up, O well," Num. xxi. 17), or the "signal words" ("Rise up, Lord" and "Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel," Num. x. 35, 36).

Signor Paolo Amaducci, a recent Italian writer, in a very curious work in two volumes, argues that Numbers xxxiii., as interpreted mystically by the Fathers of the Church, and especially

¹ "Expositor," April, 1911, pp. 308 ff.

by St. Peter Damian, was the source from which Dante derived the plan of his "Divine Comedy".¹

Ruskin knew this Book as intimately as the other Scriptures. On chapter XI. 7, "The colour thereof as the colour of bdellium," he remarks that the word "bdellium" occurs only twice in the Old Testament : in Genesis II. 12, and in this verse.

We have gathered some references to separate passages as follows :—

XI. 26, 27. Eldad and Medad.—Cromwell wrote on 12 September, 1650, to the Governor of Edinburgh Castle :—

"I hope He that ascended up on high may give His gifts to whom He pleases ; and if those gifts be the seal of Mission, be not you envious though Eldad and Medad prophesy. You know who bids us *covet earnestly the best gifts*, but chiefly *that we may prophesy* ; which the Apostle explains there to be a speaking to instruction and edification and comfort—which speaking, the instructed, the edified, and the comforted can best tell the energy and effect of, 'and say whether it is genuine'. If such evidence be, I say again, take heed you envy not for your own sakes ; lest you be guilty of a greater fault than Moses reprov'd Joshua for envying for his sake." ²

XI. 29.—William Blake concludes the Preface to his poem "Milton" with these lines :—

"And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green ?
And was the Holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen ?
And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills ?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic hills ?
Bring me my bow of burning gold !
Bring me my arrows of desire !
Bring me my spear : O clouds, unfold !
Bring me my chariot of fire !

¹ La Fonte della Divina Commedia scoperta e descritta (1911).

² "Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell."

I will not cease from mental fight
 Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
 Till we have built Jerusalem
 In England's green and pleasant land.

Would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets !
 —NUM. XI. 29."

XIV. 31.—*But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in.*

"None attain the promised land 'except those little ones who ye said shall be a prey,' i.e. the perceptions attained in and preserved from childhood and youth, which the Tempter is always endeavouring to destroy."—COVENTRY PATMORE.¹

XVI. 46, 47.—*Go, . . . and make an atonement for them.*

On this passage Ruskin remarks that Aaron is always subject to Moses. All solemn revelation is made to Moses, the civil magistrate, and he actually commands Aaron as to the fulfilment of his priestly office, and that in a necessity of life and death: "Go, and make an atonement for the people". Nor is anything more remarkable throughout the whole of the Jewish history than the perfect subjection of the Priestly to the Kingly Authority. Thus Solomon thrusts out Abiathar from being priest (1 Kings II. 27); and Jehoshaphat administers the funds of the Lord's House (2 Kings XII. 4), though that money was actually the Atonement Money, the Ransom for Souls (Exod. xxx. 12).

XVI. 48.—*And he stood between the dead and living; and the plague was stayed.*

Bishop Blomfield, early in his clerical life, speaking of the disorganized and torpid condition of the Church, said: "It is not too late for us to put fresh incense into our censers, and to stand between the dead and the living". As Bishop of London he was a great church builder.

W. R. Greg wrote at the close of his review of Stanley's "Life of Dr. Arnold: "The unsound and unhealthy tone of public morality carries with it a species of contagious virus which stains the honour of the state, and poisons the very fountains of political philosophy. Against this Dr. Arnold exclaimed with characteristic energy; and had he lived to shed

¹ "The Rod, the Root, and the Flower," p. 13.

credit over Oxford, and infuse a manlier and more honourable spirit among the rising generation of statesmen, he might have done much to arrest and antagonize the mischief. But since he has been called away, we know not where to turn for a Teacher fitted to 'take his stand' like the Prophet 'between the Living and the Dead,' and stay the progress of the moral plague."

xx. 23-29.—The death of Aaron.

Ruskin has these words on the death of Aaron: "Try to realize that going forth of Aaron from the midst of the congregation. He who had so often done sacrifice for their sin, going forth now to offer up his own spirit. He who had stood, among them, between the dead and the living, and had seen the eyes of all that great multitude turned to him, that by his intercession their breath might yet be drawn a moment more, going forth now to meet the Angel of Death face to face, and deliver himself into his hand. Try if you cannot walk, in thought, with those two brothers, and the son, as they passed the outmost tents of Israel, and turned, while yet the dew lay round about the camp, towards the slopes of Mount Hor; talking together for the last time, as, step by step, they felt the steeper rising of the rocks, and hour after hour, beneath the ascending sun, the horizon grew broader as they climbed, and all the folded hills of Idumea one by one subdued, showed amidst their hollows in the haze of noon, the windings of that long desert journey, now at last to close. But who shall enter into the thoughts of the High Priest, as his eye followed those paths of ancient pilgrimage; and, through the silence of the arid and endless hills, stretching even to the dim peak of Sinai, the whole history of those forty years was unfolded before him, and the mystery of his own ministries revealed to him; and that other Holy of Holies, of which the mountain peaks were the altars, and the mountain clouds the veil, the firmament of his Father's dwelling, opened to him still more brightly and infinitely as he drew nearer his death; until at last, on the shadeless summit—from him on whom sin was to be laid no more—from him on whose heart the names of sinful nations were to press their graven fire no longer—the brother and the son took breastplate and ephod, and left him to his rest?"¹

¹ "Modern Painters," Vol. IV, ch. xx.

"Mount Hor," wrote Dean Stanley, "is one of the very few spots connected with the wanderings of the Israelites which admits of no reasonable doubt. . . . The proofs of the identity of 'Gebel Haroun,' as it is now called, with Mount Hor are (1) the situation 'by the coast of the land of Edom,' where it is emphatically 'the mountain' (Hor) (Num. xx. 23). (2) The statement of Josephus that Aaron's death occurred on a high mountain enclosing Petra. (3) The modern name and traditional sanctity of the mountain as connected with Aaron's tomb."¹

See also Dr. Horatius Bonar's poem on Mount Hor.

XXI. 4.—*The soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.*

"Now I beheld in my dream (says Bunyan) that they had not journeyed far, but the river and the way for a time parted; at which they were not a little sorry, yet they durst not go out of the way. Now the way from the river was rough, and their feet tender by reason of their travels: so the souls of the pilgrims were much 'discouraged because of the way'. Wherefore still as they went on they wished for better way."

XXI. 6.—*The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people died.*

The National Gallery contains Rubens' picture, "The Brazen Serpent". Sir E. T. Cook, in his "Handbook," quotes Ruskin's remarks in "Stones of Venice": "It is interesting to observe the difference in the treatment of this subject by the three great masters, Michael Angelo, Rubens, and Tintoret. . . . Rubens and Michael Angelo made the fiery serpents huge boa-constrictors, and knotted the sufferers together with them. Tintoret makes . . . the serpents little flying and fluttering monsters, like lampreys with wings, and the children of Israel, instead of being thrown into convulsed and writhing groups, are scattered, fainting in the fields, far away in the distance. As usual, Tintoret's conception, while thoroughly characteristic of himself, is also truer to the words of Scripture. We are told that 'the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people'; we are not told that they crushed the people to death. And, while thus the truest, it is also the most terrific conception."

¹ "Sinai and Palestine" (1856), p. 87, note.

xxi. 17 f.—*The song of the well.*

Dr. G. A. Smith translates this passage:—

“Spring, O Well, answer her!
Well, princes dug her;
Delved her folk’s nobles
With batons, with their staves.”¹

THE STORY OF BALAAM.

xxii. ff.—In a recent study of Balaam, Dr. G. A. Smith remarks that this portion of the Book of Numbers “has engaged the genius and been illuminated by the expository powers of some of the greatest preachers of Christianity”. He names especially Bishop Butler with his sermon on the character of Balaam, and John Henry Newman in his discourse on Obedience without Love. “Both these classics display a rich sagacity and a solemn power of searching the heart.” In the character of Balaam he recognizes “the servile temper which does not understand the fullness of the truth that has come to him and staggers beneath it. He grovels under the approach of his convictions, but he honestly utters them when they arrive. If I may take another Arabian prophet, upon much the same stage of development as Balaam, I would remind you that Mohammed behaved very similarly under the earliest impulses of his calling—a bemused, ecstatic, perhaps epileptic man: yet he lived to bring all Arabia to his feet.”²

A highly favourable view of Balaam is taken by Mr. A. C. Benson in a recent article. “Balaam,” he says, “is a fiery, impulsive, determined figure with a splendid dignity, stepping out of the unknown, a man who lived close to God and knew His will and His presence. . . . He has the true knightly spirit, and lives undismayed before God.”³

xxiii. 9.—*Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.*

Bunyan tells us in “Grace Abounding” that the poor women of Bedford who sat at a door in the sun and talked about the things of God, “spake as if joy did make them speak”. “They

¹ “The Early Poetry of Israel” (Schweich Lectures, 1910), p. 22.

² “Expositor,” January, 1913.

³ “Church Family Newspaper,” 13 June, 1913.

spake with such pleasantness of Scripture language, and with such appearance of grace in all they said, that they were to me as if they had found a new world ; as if they were people *that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned among their neighbours.*"

XXIII. 21.—"When Balak brought Balaam to look upon Israel, that half-inspired prophet said of the people :—

‘Yahweh their God is with them
And the noise of a king among them.

"They had then no human king ; they were a crowd of tribes so loosely bound that after a few years they broke apart. But in the confused noise which rose from their camp by the Jordan to his lonely station on the heights of Moab, this discerning Pagan caught the rhythm of a natural life conscious of leadership and musical with memories of deliverance ; the heart of a people throbbing towards their God, the murmur of a divine destiny." ¹

XXIV. 4-16.—Ruskin reminds us that the Spirit of Prophecy consisted with the avarice of Balaam, and the disobedience of Saul. "Could we spare from its page that parable, which he said, who saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance ; but having his eyes open ; though we know that the sword of his punishment was then sharp in its sheath beneath him in the plains of Moab ? It is not our part to look hardly, nor to look always, to the character or the deeds of men, but to accept from all of them, and to hold fast, that which we can prove good, and feel to be ordained for us."

XXIV. 13.—*I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, f.*

William Blake wrote to Dr. Trusler from Hercules Buildings, Lambeth (1799) : "I hope that none of my designs will be destitute of infinite particulars which will present themselves to the contemplator. And though I call them mine, I know that they are not mine, being of the same opinion with Milton when he says that the Muse visits his slumbers and awakes and governs his songs when morn purples the east, and being also in the pre-

¹ Dr. G. A. Smith, "Expositor," January, 1913.

dicament of the prophet who says, 'I cannot go beyond the command of the Lord, to speak good or bad'." ¹

THE DEATH OF MOSES.

xxvii. 12, 13.—James Gilmour of Mongolia wrote in 1890 : " Poor old Moses, another outlaw, what a battered old life he led, but what a grand soul, and how wonderfully he outlived it all, and was quite hale when called to die ! How his people troubled him—so like the Chinese ! Fancy Moses going up to the mountain to die alone. It is so nice to have a glimpse of him in the New Testament alongside of Elijah, who too was once under a cloud. God does not keep up things. 'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us'."

xxx. 3-5.—This passage is quoted with melancholy and tragic meaning in "The Bride of Lammermoor". When Edgar Ravenswood returns from abroad and reaches the home of the Ashtons at the moment when Lucy has signed the contract of marriage with Bucklaw, he says : "Once more, Miss Lucy Ashton, I am the Ravenswood to whom you granted the solemn engagement, which you now desire to retract and cancel". Lucy's bloodless lips could only falter out the words, "It was my mother".

" 'She speaks truly,' said Lady Ashton, 'it was I who, authorized alike by the laws of God and man, advised her and concurred with her, to set aside an unhappy and precipitate engagement, and to annul it by the authority of Scripture itself.'

" 'Scripture !' said Ravenswood, scornfully.

" 'Let him hear the text,' said Lady Ashton, appealing to the divine, 'on which you yourself, with cautious reluctance, declared the nullity of the pretended engagement insisted upon by this violent man.'

"The clergyman took his clasped Bible from his pocket, and read the following words : 'If a woman vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth ; and her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his

¹ "Letters of William Blake," p. 59, edited by Archibald G. B. Russell.

peace at her: then all her vows shall stand, and every vow wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.'

" 'And was it not even so with us?' interrupted Ravenswood.

" 'Control thy impatience, young man,' answered the divine, 'and hear what follows in the sacred text: "But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her."' "

" 'And was not,' said Lady Ashton, fiercely and triumphantly breaking in—'was not ours the case stated in the holy writ?—Will this person deny, that the instant her parents heard of the vow, or bond, by which our daughter had bound her soul, we disallowed the same in the most express terms, and informed him by writing of our determination?' "

" 'And is this all?' said Ravenswood, looking at Lucy—'are you willing to barter sworn faith, the exercise of free will, and the feelings of mutual affection, to this wretched hypocritical sophistry?' "

" 'Hear him!' said Lady Ashton, looking to the clergyman—'hear the blasphemer!'

" 'May God forgive him,' said Bide-the-bent, 'and enlighten his ignorance!'" "

XXXIII. 1, 2.—*These are the journeys of the children of Israel, f.*

John Bunyan, in the Preface to "Grace Abounding," quotes this passage along with Deuteronomy viii. 2, and adds: "It is profitable for Christians to be often calling to mind the very beginnings of grace with their souls. 'It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations' (Exod. xii. 42). 'O my God' (saith David, Ps. xlii. 6), 'my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember Thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.' He remembered also the lion and the bear, when he went to fight with the Giant of Gath (1 Sam. xvii. 36, 37)."

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.

THE great verse of Deuteronomy, the proclamation that rings through all ages of Hebrew history, is that of chapter vi. 4, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One". With these words, in life and in death, the Jew bears witness to his faith. The noble Akiba, one of the heroes of the Talmud, described by Emanuel Deutsch as "the most exalted, most romantic, and most heroic character perhaps in that vast gallery of the learned of his time," expiated his patriotic rashness under Trajan and Hadrian by a cruel death at the hands of Roman executioners. The legend adds that his soul fled at the moment when, in his last agony, his mouth cried out the confession of God's unity, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One!"¹

In the Ghetto novels of Mr. Zangwill we hear much of the *Shemang*, or confession of the Unity. Esther, the heroine of "Children of the Ghetto," attends a service on the Day of Atonement, and joins in the immemorial declaration of her people. "Suddenly there fell a vast silence; even from without no sound came to break the awful stillness. It was as if all creation paused to hear a pregnant word. 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One!' sang the cantor frenziedly.

"All, all the ghostly congregation answered with a great, great cry, closing their eyes and rocking frantically to and fro: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One!'

"They seemed like a great army of the sheeted dead risen to testify to the unity. The magnetic tremor that ran through the synagogue thrilled the lonely girl to the core; once again her dead self woke, her dead ancestors that would not be shaken off lived and moved in her. She was sucked up into the great wave of passionate faith, and from her lips came the rapturous surrender

¹ "Quarterly Review," October, 1867, p. 428.

to an overmastering impulse, the half-hysterical protestation : 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One!'"

A recent traveller among the Moslems of the Nile Valley says that when a pause occurs in conversation, one of the company will say, "God is One," and the whole company in a low murmur will repeat, "There is no God but one God," and conversation will be resumed.

VI. 5.—*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

St. John of the Cross says on this verse : "The might of the soul consists in its powers, passions, appetites ; all that is governed by the will. Now when the will directs these passions and powers and appetites towards God and turns them away from all that is not God, it guards the strength of the soul for God, and so it comes to love Him with all its might."

VII. 22.—*And the Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little.*

J. M. Neale writes :—

"In that true-hearted book, the 'Search for Sir John Franklin,' you read that the little vessel won some three hundred miles in the course of the autumn, by watching every opportunity, day and night, sometimes by sails, sometimes by one means, sometimes by another, never a moment's advantage missed ; and that was the sum total of all their exertions. Well : then they were surrounded by floe ice, and made fast to it, and every day, through that long winter, it was drift, drift, drift backwards, till they not only lost all the three hundred miles they had made with so much labour, but three hundred more at the end of them : so that they commenced the labour of the second year with double the distance of the first lying before them. Then by the same system they, by the end of the season of navigation, retrieved all they had lost, and did a little more : and so now making themselves fast to an island, they made good their ground, and at the beginning of the third year finally succeeded.

"No one can read that story without finding therein a marvellous symbol of our Christian progress. You know how it has to be done by any means and by all means ; a little bit here, a little bit there : sometimes a success this way, sometimes a success that way ; then a long drift backward ; a long season of

cold and dark ; cold, without the perceptible love descending from the Holy Ghost ; dark, without the perceptible shining of the Sun of Righteousness." ¹

The favourite motto of St. Francis de Sales in dealing with his penitents was *pedetentim*, step by step.

VIII. 7.—*The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills.*

Frances Willard wrote, when telling in her diary of her love for Charles H. Fowler : " I've heard father tell how the brooks come down the mountains in New England ; out of dark silent places among evergreens and moss and shadow they steal forth, and gurgle with such a pleasant murmur down the steep hill-sides. Sometimes they make rivers, I suppose, and sometimes not. Well, I keep on hearing such a musical sound all the time, and I guess that's in my heart too. It's rather strange, I know, and not like me, but I've read of 'the Fountain very far down' in some people's natures—perhaps, it has been reached in mine ! " ²

XI. 10-12.—*The land . . . drinketh water of the rain of heaven.*

" How many labourers are now among us, literally watering God's garden with their foot !—a holy and blessed work : but one in which we must not forget that the country in which our work lies is *a land rich in itself*, full of fountains and depths springing out of its own hills and valleys, 'a land that drinketh water of the rain of heaven'."—DORA GREENWELL.

XI. 29. Gerizim and Ebal.—" The good succeeds to the evil as day succeeds the night, but so also the evil to the good. Gerizim and Ebal, birth and death, light and darkness, heaven and hell, divide the existence of man, and his Futurity."—RUSKIN.³

XVI. 10.—*Thou shalt keep the feast of weeks.*

" In the good old days," writes Israel Abrahams, " the whole atmosphere of Jewish life was made friendly by the concern which each Jew felt in all Jews' children. As every year the

¹ " Sermons on Passages from the Prophets," Vol. I, p. 234.

² Ray Strachey, " Frances Willard : her Life and Work," p. 99.

³ " Stones of Venice."

Feast of Weeks came round, each tiny boy, just as soon as he was able to lisp his Hebrew alphabet, was carried to the synagogue; he was put in the Rabbi's arms, and the Rabbi bent down over the child and kissed him, and gave him a cake on which was inscribed in honey the verse, 'The law which Moses commanded us is the inheritance of the house of Jacob,' and the child lisped the words after him, sucked the honey and ate the cake, that the words of the Law might be sweet in his mouth, and all the congregation beamed with smiles."¹

XIX. 18.—*The judges shall make diligent inquisition.*

"There is a tale in the 'Bahr-el-Ghazal' about an old man who accused another of stealing his cattle. The Englishman listened to the plaintiff, who was supported by his son as witness; then he had the accused brought before him and asked him what he had to say in defence. The old man arose. 'Is this justice?' he cried. 'Come away, my son. *This man listens to both sides.*'"²

XXXI. 6.—*Be strong.*

Emerson wrote to Carlyle in 1864: "The Colonna motto would fit your letter, 'though sad, I am strong'".³

XXXI. 16.—*The Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers.*

We read of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that each was 'gathered unto his people'.

Dr. Livingstone wrote in his Journal for 1866:—

"In passing the sepulchral grove of Chisumpi our guide remarked, 'Chisumpi's forefathers sleep here'. This was the first time I have heard the word 'sleep' applied to death in these parts."⁴

XXXI. 19.—*Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for Me against the children of Israel.*

"Vouchsafe to call to mind that God did make

A last and lasting'st piece, a song. He spake

¹ "Aspects of Judaism," p. 5.

² E. S. Stevens, "My Year in the Sudan," p. 40.

³ "Correspondence," Vol. II, p. 284.

⁴ "Last Journals," Vol. I. p. 133.

To Moses to deliver unto all
That song because He knew they would let fall
The law, the prophets, and the history,
But keep the song still in their memory."

—JOHN DONNE.¹

xxxii. 2.—*My speech shall distil as the dew.*

"When you go out, delighted, into the dew of the morning, have you ever considered why it is so rich upon the grass;—why it is *not* upon the trees? It *is* partly on the trees, but yet your memory of it will be always chiefly of its gleam upon the lawn. On many trees you will find there is none at all. I cannot follow out here the many inquiries connected with this subject, but, broadly, remember the branched trees are fed chiefly by rain—the unbranched ones by dew, visible or invisible; that is to say, at all events by moisture which they can gather for themselves out of the air; or else by streams and springs. Hence the division of the verse of the song of Moses: 'My doctrine shall drop as the rain; my speech shall distil as the dew: as the *small* rain upon the tender *herb*, as the showers upon the grass'."—RUSKIN.

xxxii. 11.—*As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings.*

Gilbert White of Selborne wrote: "The more I reflect on the *στοργή* of animals, the more I am astonished at its effects. . . . This affection sublimates the passions, quickens the invention, and sharpens the sagacity of the brute creation."

THE DEATH OF MOSES.

xxxii. 49.—*Get thee up into this mountain.*

Ruskin in "Modern Painters" has this passage on the death of Moses:—

"For forty years Moses had not been alone. The care and burden of all the people, the weight of their woe, and guilt, and death, had been upon him continually. The multitude had been laid upon him as if he had conceived them; their tears had been his meat, night and day, until he had felt as if God

¹ "An Anatomy of the World."

had withdrawn His favour from him, and he had prayed that he might be slain, and not see his wretchedness. And now, at last, the command came, 'Get thee up into this mountain'. The weary hands that had been so long stayed up against the enemies of Israel, might lean again upon the shepherd's staff, and fold themselves for the shepherd's prayer—for the shepherd's slumber. Not strange to his feet, though forty years unknown, the roughness of the bare mountain-path, as he climbed from ledge to ledge of Abarim; not strange to his aged eyes the scattered clusters of the mountain herbage, and the broken shadows of the cliffs, indented far across the silence of uninhabited ravines; scenes such as those among which, with none, as now, beside him but God, he had led his flocks so often; and which he had left, how painfully! taking upon him the appointed power, to make of the fenced city a wilderness, and to fill the desert with songs of deliverance. It was not to embitter the last hours of his life that God restored to him, for a day, the beloved solitudes he had lost; and breathed the peace of the perpetual hills around him, and cast the world in which he had laboured and sinned far beneath his feet, in that midst of dying blue;—all sin, all wandering, soon to be forgotten for ever; the Dead Sea—a type of God's anger understood by him, of all men, most clearly, who had seen the earth open her mouth, and the sea his depth, to overwhelm the companies of those who contended with his Master—laid waveless beneath him; and beyond it, the fair hills of Judah, and the soft plains and banks of Jordan, purple in the evening light as with the blood of redemption, and fading in their distant fullness into mysteries of promise and of love. There, with his unabated strength, his undimmed glance, lying down upon the utmost rocks, with angels waiting near to contend for the spoils of his spirit, he put off his earthly armour. We do deep reverence to his companion prophet, for whom the chariot of fire came down from heaven; but was his death less noble, whom his Lord Himself buried in the vales of Moab, keeping, in the secrets of the eternal counsels, the knowledge of a sepulchre, from which he was to be called, in the fullness of time, to talk with that Lord, upon Hermon, of the death that He should accomplish at Jerusalem?"¹

¹ "Modern Painters," Vol. IV, ch. xx, § 47.

“A man might die very comfortably, like Moses with his harness on his back, if he only knew that like Moses he had done God’s work, and had angels in waiting to take him up to his reward.”—DR. JAMES MACGREGOR.

XXXII. 52.—*Yet thou shalt see the land before thee ; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel.*

In his autobiography Father Tyrrell wrote :—

“I felt myself a sort of Balaam, forced, I knew not clearly how or why, to slave in the cause of Christ ; it was a sort of obsession with me—an *idée fixe*, nor have I ever seriously considered my own salvation as more than a slight probability. ‘Thou shalt behold from afar the land which I will give to the children of Israel, but thou shalt not enter therein’ has expressed my most sanguine ambition, yet I felt and feel that my own belief and interest in the cause would languish and die away were I to neglect myself, and that the untruthfulness of such inconsistency would be impossible for me.”

Bishop Edward King preached an Easter sermon from the words, “Thou shalt see the land before thee”.

XXXIII. 16.—*The good will of him that dwelt in the bush.*

Out of the many sermons which he wrote during the first three years of his ministry, Bishop Phillips Brooks chose out four for publication. “Two of these (says his biographer) have a distinct autobiographical value. The sermon entitled ‘The Young and the Old Christian’ from Deuteronomy xxxiii. 16, ‘The good will of him that dwelt in the bush,’ written in 1871, has the marks of the earlier Philadelphia manner, when he rejoiced in discovering some unfamiliar passage of Scripture whose meaning was not at once obvious. The thought of the sermon bears on the relation between the beginning and the end of the Christian life ; on the unbroken process of growth in which the personal Christ becomes clearer to us in the years of mature manhood ; so that whatever the years may bring in the accretions of knowledge and wisdom we shall never be called on to renounce as unreal the vision of youth by the bush side when we first heard the voice of God in our ears.”

XXXIII. 25.—*As thy days, so shall thy strength be.*

When Henry Mill (brother of John Stuart Mill) was dying in
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Cornwall at the age of nineteen, Caroline Fox and her family were attentive and affectionate visitors to his sickroom. "Mamma led the conversation gradually into a rather more serious channel (says the diarist), and Henry Mill told Clara afterwards that her kind manner, her use of the words *thee* and *thou*, and her allusions to religious subjects quite overcame him, and he was on the point of bursting into tears. She gave him a hymn book, and Clara marked one which she specially recommended, 'As thy day, thy strength shall be'. For the last few evenings they have read him a psalm or some other part of Scripture."¹

xxxiii. 27.—*Underneath are the everlasting arms.*

"Know this, believer, to thy everlasting comfort, that if these arms have once embraced thee, neither sin nor hell can get thee thence for ever. The Sanctuary is inviolable and the Rock impregnable, whither thou art fled, and thou art safe locked up to all eternity."—BAXTER'S "Saints' Rest".

xxxiv. 1.—*And Moses went up . . . to the top of Pisgah. . . . And the Lord showed him all the land.*

Bishop Boyd Carpenter tells us that when the Empress Frederick was dying, she said, looking round at the beauty of the scene, "I feel like Moses on Pisgah, looking at the land of promise, which I must not enter".

xxxiv. 3.—*Jericho, the city of palm trees.*

"O how I long to travell back,
And tread again that ancient track !
That I might once more reach that plaine,
Where first I left my glorious traine ;
From whence th' Inlightned spirit sees
That shady City of Palme trees."

—HENRY VAUGHAN.

xxxiv. 4.—*I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither* (with Num. xxvii. 12, 13, and Deut. xxxii. 52).

Father Tyrrell wrote on the title-page of his Breviary:—

"Thou shalt see from afar the land which the Lord God

¹ "Journals of Caroline Fox," Vol. I, p. 132.

will give to the children of Israel, but thou shalt not enter therein."

To a friend he wrote: "Had I been Moses I don't think I should have felt not entering the land of Promise one bit, so long as I knew that Israel would do so some day. I do not justify this, but I understand it; just as I do understand a man committing a mortal sin rather than that one dear to him should do so."¹

xxxiv. 6.—*No man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.*

On the funeral of Dr. Chalmers (June, 1847) Dr. John Cairns of Berwick wrote: "It seemed truly a national act, and the holy Catholic Church might be said to follow in the train. What would the Israelites have done with Moses had they been able to find his body, or if Paul had died only yesterday, how would the heart of Christendom have leaped up over his grave! The tears of the universal Church over such an occasion as this are a delightful evidence of the change since the days of the Apostles; and surely also the grief of Scotland, for who has done so much for generations to make it what it is as a Christian land?"²

¹ "Life," p. 4.

² Prof. McEwen, "Life and Letters of John Cairns," p. 279.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

"THE character of Joshua," says Bishop King, "unlike that of many of God's servants, stands before us in Holy Scripture without reproach." His name has been honoured in history as that of a mighty captain and patriot. In proof of this we may take an example from the fourteenth and another from the nineteenth century.

The nobles of Robert Bruce assembled in Aberbrothock in 1320, directed a letter or manifesto to the Pope which is full of the spirit of a manly independence. Patrick Fraser Tytler, in his "History of Scotland," gives as follows their reference to the king :—

"From these innumerable evils have we been freed, under the help of that God who woundeth and who maketh whole, by our most valiant prince and king, Lord Robert, who, like a second Maccabæus, or Joshua, hath cheerfully endured all labour and weariness, and exposed himself to every species of danger and privation, that he might rescue from the hands of the enemy his ancient people and rightful inheritance, whom also Divine Providence, and the right of succession according to those laws and customs, which we will maintain to the death as well as the common consent of us all, have made our prince and king." ¹

In the sculptures of the Cathedral built at Moscow to commemorate the deliverance from the French invasion of 1812, groups from Russian history alternate with scenes from the story of Joshua's entrance into Palestine, of Deborah encouraging Barak, of David returning from the slaughter of Goliath, of the coronation and the grandeur of Solomon. ²

1.—In his memorial address on Mr. W. T. Stead, one of the vic-

¹ Vol. I, p. 319.

² Dean Stanley's "History of the Eastern Church".

tims of the "Titanic" disaster (15 April, 1912), Dr. Clifford mentioned that the chapter of the Bible which had been most helpful to the famous editor during his career was the first of Joshua, with its exhortations to "Be Strong".

I. 5 (with Deut. xxxi. 6, 8).—*I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*

Sir Walter Scott in "The Monastery" tells us of Mary Avenel's readings in the Bible, "The Black Book, well remembered by her as her mother's favourite study". The affectionate mother had inserted slips of paper in the volume. Some dealt with controversial topics, though even these "were treated with a spirit of calmness and Christian charity, which might have been an example to the theologians of the period". . . . "Other papers there were which had no reference whatever to polemics, but were the simple effusions of a devout mind communing with itself. Among these was one frequently used, as it seemed from the state of the manuscript, on which the mother of Mary had transcribed and placed together those affecting texts to which the heart has recourse in affliction, and which assure us at once of the sympathy and protection afforded to the children of the promise. In Mary Avenel's state of mind, these attracted her above all the other lessons, which, coming from a hand so dear, had reached her at a time so critical, and in a manner so touching. She read the affecting promise, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,' and the consoling exhortation, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee'. She read them, and her heart acquiesced in the conclusion, Surely this is the Word of God!"

II. Rahab.—In Dante's "Paradise" the harlot Rahab has a place of honour. In canto ix. we read:—

" Know then, the soul of Rahab
Is in that gladsome harbour, to our tribe
United, and the foremost rank assigned.
She to that heav'n, at which the shadow ends
Of your sublunar world, was taken up,
First, in Christ's triumph, of all souls redeemed :
For well behaved, that, in some part of heaven,
She should remain a trophy, to declare

The mighty conquest won with either palm ;
 For that she favoured first the high exploit
 Of Joshua on the holy land, whereof
 The Pope recks little now."

(Cary's translation.)

"The purity she has now," says Dr. Carroll, "is compared to the sparkling of a sunbeam in pure water. This comparison and the likening of her in line 121 to a palm seems to me a good example of the way in which Dante drew his similes and figures out of the heart of the subject he was dealing with. Rahab called up before his memory Jericho 'the city of palm-trees,' and the innumerable streams of her plain sparkling in the eastern sun as they pursue their way to the Jordan a few miles distant. It is this picture in his imagination which dictates these figures of the palm and the sunlit water. Dante sets her as near the eternal Sun as he can by connecting her with the ending of the shadowy cone of earth."

A peculiar reverence, Dr. Carroll notes, gathered round this woman from very early times. "In the genealogy of Christ given by Matthew (i. 5) her name occurs as one of the ancestresses of our Lord, and this of itself was enough to make her sacred to every Christian. Further, she was believed to have been a prophetess of the sufferings of Christ upon the cross, by faith in which she was finally saved. In his first Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Clement of Rome, after narrating the story of the spies, adds: 'And moreover they gave her a sign, that she should hang out from her house a scarlet thread, thereby showing beforehand that through the blood of the Lord there shall be redemption unto all them that believe and hope on God. Ye see, dearly beloved, not only faith, but prophecy, is found in the woman.' This interpretation of the scarlet thread was adopted by the Apostolic Fathers, and was doubtless in Dante's mind when he called Rahab 'a palm'

'of the high victory

Which was achieved with the one and the other palm,'
 that is, of the two hands of Christ upon the cross—a trophy of the victory by which He won the heavenly Canaan, as Joshua did the earthly one. For this reason she is regarded as an Old

Testament type of the Christian Church, as Joshua himself is of Christ ; and

‘ Because she favoured the first glory
Of Joshua upon the Holy Land,’

and was herself the first-fruits of that glory, therefore she was the first of all souls to be rescued from Limbo and taken up to this star in the Triumph of Christ. And now, as Mr. Gardner says, she is ‘ the last soul who appears within the earth’s shadow, as a type of the Church which should guide men beyond that shadow ’.”¹

III.—The passing of the Jordan.

The passing of the Jordan, in the third chapter of the book of Joshua, seemed to Coleridge perhaps the purest and sheerest miracle recorded in the Bible. “ It seems (he said) to have been wrought for the miracle’s sake, and so thereby to show to the Jews—the descendants of those who had come out of Egypt—that the same God who had appeared to their fathers, and who had by miracles, in many respects providential only, preserved them in the wilderness, was *their* God also. The manna and quails were ordinary provisions of Providence, rendered miraculous by certain laws and qualities annexed to them in the particular instance. The passage of the Red Sea was effected by a strong wind, which, we are told, drove back the waters, and so on. But then, again, the death of the first-born was purely miraculous. Hence, then, both Jews and Egyptians might take occasion to learn that it was *one* and *the same* God who interfered specially and who governed all generally.”²

III. 17.—The crossing of Jordan.

Mr. Standfast, in the “ Pilgrim’s Progress,” said as he was crossing the river : “ This river has been a terror to many : yea, the thoughts of it have also often frightened me. Now, methinks, I stand easy ; my foot is fixed upon that on which the feet of the priests that bare the ark of the covenant stood, while Israel went over this Jordan. The waters, indeed, are to the palate bitter, and to the stomach cold : yet the thoughts of what I am going to, and of the convoy that wait for me on the other side, lie as a glowing coal at my heart.”

IV. 22.—*Ye shall let your children know.*

Dr. John Brown says in one of his letters of 1842 :—

¹ “ In Patria,” pp. 158-60.

² “ Table Talk.”

“Harvey has a very characteristic picture of great beauty which has been sold for £250. It is the interior of a Scottish farmer’s kitchen on Sabbath Evening ; he, the Farmer, is sitting in his chair, the open Bible with its cover of calf’s-skin on his knee, with his homely, serious, thoughtful face, his comely wife beside him with her son’sy infant asleep in her lap, the big key of the door loosely held in his plump, sleepy hand. She is leaning somewhat forward, and anxious that her bairns should do well. They are standing in a sort of half-circle, all serious but all childlike. They have been saying their ‘Questions’ and are listening to their father explaining some passage of Scripture. Behind them are the ‘Man servant and the maid servant,’ two rustic beauties. Through the window you see day gently passing into night, the time when ‘comes still evening on, and twilight grey has in her sober livery all things clad,’ when ‘silence accompanies’ and when in a short while ‘Silence’ will be ‘pleased’. The whole picture is full of meaning. The solemn Shadows of Eternity are gathering over the family, as softly and yet as surely as the shadows of night are falling on the earth and all its children ; and the father is seeing in his beloved children ‘Beings breathing thoughtful breath, Travellers between life and death’ and after death the judgment ; and beyond, that undiscovered country from whose bourne none of these little travellers will return ; and he is telling them all this in his own homely way, and they are listening with simple wondering seriousness.”

VI. 4.—*Trumpets of rams’ horns.*

Prof. A. R. Gordon remarks that the use of animal’s horns as loud-sounding instruments helped in the musical development of Israel’s national worship. “In Old Testament history the ram’s horn is expressly mentioned in the story of the capture of Jericho (Josh. vi. 5) and in the chronicler’s account of the institution of the Levitical services (1 Chron. xxv. 5). But as the Shôphâr or trumpet—a natural horn only gradually replaced by a metal imitation of the same—it played a much more conspicuous part among that people. The shôphâr was associated especially with scenes of warfare. To its peremptory blasts the leader summoned his hosts to the battle (Judges III. 27 ; VI. 34 ; 1 Sam. XIII. 3). . . . A significant place is assigned to the shôphâr in the later eschatological literature. To the loud blasts

of the trumpet the scattered Jews are brought back to worship Jahweh in the holy mountain of Jerusalem (Is. xxvii. 13). According to the apocalyptic Zechariah, the Lord God Himself blows the trumpet for the last judgment (Zech. ix. 14). And this idea has found its way into the New Testament, and become an essential element in the visions of the end (cf. Matt. xxiv. 31; 1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 16)."¹

vii. 25.—*And Joshua said [to Achan], Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day.*

In December, 1520, Luther burnt the Pope's Bull outside the Elster gate of Wittenberg. A large crowd assembled, the students built a pyre, a certain "master," who was probably Melanchthon, applied the torch, and Luther, as he threw the copy of the Bull into the fire, uttered these solemn words: "Because thou hast brought down the truth of God, He also brings thee down unto His fire to-day. Amen."²

x. 12.—*Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.*

Don Luis de Avila, the chronicler of the German campaigns of the Emperor Charles V, did not hesitate to print his belief that the miracle which had been wrought for Joshua and the chosen people in the valley of Ajalon, had been repeated on behalf of Charles and his Spaniards on the banks of the Elbe. Some years later the Duke of Alba, who had also been at Muhlberg, was asked by the King of France whether he had observed that the sun stood still. "I was so busy that day," said the cautious soldier, "with what was passing on earth that I had no time to notice what took place in heaven."³

Charles Lamb wrote:—

"‘Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.’ Who, in reading this magnificent Hebraism, in his conception, sees aught but the heroic son of Nun, with the outstretched arm, and the greater and lesser light obsequious! Doubtless there were to be seen hill and dale, and chariots and horsemen, on open plain, or winding by secret defiles, and all the circumstances and stratagems of war. But whose eyes

¹ "The Poets of the Old Testament," pp. 56-58.

² See Dr. Preserved Smith's "Luther," p. 101.

³ Sir W. Stirling-Maxwell, "Cloister Life of the Emperor Charles V."

would have been conscious of this array at the interposition of the synchronic miracle? Yet in the picture of this subject of the artist of the 'Belshazzar's Feast'—no ignoble work, either—the marshalling and landscape of the war is everything, the miracle sinks into an anecdote of the day; and the eye may 'dart through rank and file traverse' for some minutes, before it shall discover, among his armed followers, *which is Joshua.*"¹

xx. 5.—*And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly and hated him not beforetime.*

Bunyan received great comfort from this verse amidst his spiritual distresses.

"I thought verily I was the man that must enter, because I had smitten my neighbour *unwittingly, and hated him not aforetime.* I hated Him not aforetime; no, I prayed unto Him, was tender of sinning against Him; yea and against this wicked temptation I had strove for a twelvemonth before; yea, and also when it did pass through my heart, it did in spite of my teeth; wherefore I thought I had a right to enter this city, and the elders, which are the apostles, were not to deliver me up. This, therefore, was great comfort to me, and gave me much ground of hope."²

xxii. 22.—Macaulay tells us that on the Sunday preceding the battle of Sedgemoor, Monmouth's followers, many of whom had been brought up after the Puritan fashion, passed a great part of the day in religious exercises. "The dissenting preachers who had taken arms against Popery, and some of whom had probably fought in the great civil war, prayed and preached in red coats and huge jackboots, with swords by their sides. Ferguson was one of those who harangued. He took for his text the awful imprecation by which the Israelites who dwelt beyond Jordan cleared themselves from the charge ignorantly brought against them by their brethren on the other side of the river: 'The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth; and Israel he shall know. If it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, save us not this day.'"

¹ In the essay on the "Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art".

² "Grace Abounding."

THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

DEAN STANLEY wrote to Dr. John Brown in 1861 :—

“ I turn with relief from all this to the history of the Judges of Israel, in which I am now immersed. In that most human of all Books of the Bible what a fire, what an inexhaustible fire, of the best kind of Inspiration ! ”

II. 10.—*And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers : and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which He had done for Israel.*

This text is printed on the title-page of Patrick Walker's “ Some Remarkable Passages of the Life and Death of Mr. Alexander Peden ”.

THE SONG OF DEBORAH.

v.—“ A song that for force and fire is worthy to be placed alongside the noblest battle-odes in any language.”—A. R. GORDON.¹

“ The poem which is usually and rightly called ‘ the Song of Deborah ’ (Judges v. 2-31) is recognized by the greatest experts in ancient literatures and by the keenest critics, as an immediate echo of the historical event which is there described ; and it is easy to prove that this view of theirs is fully justified.

“ Have not a vivid mass of the most amazingly individual characteristics been gathered together in this poem ? There, for instance, the tribe of Dan comes before us—‘ dwelling beside the ships as a stranger ’ (ver. 17) because this tribe had probably entered the maritime service of the Phœnicians, and stands there, a deeply bowed form, in the background of the picture. It symbolizes the town of Meroz, which is nowhere else mentioned, and yet is remembered here with a curse (ver. 23). What an exceedingly important notice ! For it is true that descriptions

¹ “ The Poets of the Old Testament,” p. 31.

like the thrilling section of the song which tells of the slaying of Sisera by Jael, the wife of a Kenite (vers. 24-27), or the dramatic delineation of the longing of the mother of Sisera for the homecoming of her son (vers. 28-30) might have been composed at a later time. But accusations and maledictions could not have been introduced into the historical picture without a cause. Such language is uttered here against the unpatriotic dilatoriness of the tribe of Reuben (ver. 15 f.) and against the town of Meroz which betrayed the fatherland (ver. 23). The Song of Deborah, then, is the direct reflection of a true historical event."—PROF. E. KÖNIG, "Expositor," April, 1911, p. 311.

v. 22, 26.—*Then were the horsehoofs broken by the means of . . . the prancings of their mighty ones.*

Prof. A. R. Gordon says: "The reproduction of the furious gallop of the strong ones 'by the waters of Megiddo' or the crashing of the fatal blow on Sisera, in the sounding notes of Deborah's great battle-hymn (Judges v. 22, 26), the unmistakable suggestions of the 'surging of the peoples, that surge like the surging of the seas,' and the 'rushing of nations, that rush like the rushing of mighty waters' (Is. xvii. 12 ff.) and Nahum's brilliant picture of the flashing and raging of the war-chariots at the assault of Nineveh (Nah. ii. 3 ff.) rank among the finest verbal effects in literature."¹

vii. 9-11.—*Arise, get thee down to the host.*

St. John of the Cross quotes this passage among others in chapter xxii. of his "Subido del Monte Carmelo," where he shows how God is willing to confirm His word and promises by the mouth of one man to another.

God had told Gideon many times that he would defeat the Midianites, but Gideon remained doubtful and timorous, God having permitted such weakness to remain within his heart, until he heard through the mouth of men the confirmation of what God had said to him. "So when He saw the weakness of Gideon, God said, 'Arise, get thee down into the camp . . . and thou shalt hear what they say, and afterwards shall thine hands be strengthened to go down into the camp'. And so it was that when he heard one Midianite telling another his dream in which

¹ "The Poets of the Old Testament," pp. 6, 7.

he had dreamt that Gideon was about to conquer them, he was greatly strengthened, and began to make eager preparation for the battle." With this passage St. John compares Exodus iv. 14, 15, where Aaron is given as a helper of the faith of Moses.¹

THE CAKE OF BARLEY-BREAD.

vii. 13.—Sir George Trevelyan writes in "Cawnpore" :—

"During the early days of March, every hamlet in the Gangetic provinces received from its neighbour the innocent present of two chupatties, or bannocks of salt and dough, which form the staple food of the population. This far-famed token, the fiery cross of India, had no definite signification. It notified generally that men would do well to keep themselves prepared, for that something was in the air. In after days, one who had learned their effect by bitter experience likened the chupatties to the cake of barley-bread which foreshadowed the destruction of the host of Midian. And so, from hand to hand, and from house to house, and from village to village, the mysterious symbol flew, and spread through the length and breadth of the land confusion and questioning, a wild terror and a wilder hope. Truly, it may be said that, as in Judæa of old, there was distress of nations and perplexity; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that were coming on the earth."

THE DEFEAT OF MIDIAN.

vii. 21-25.—Cromwell wrote to Fairfax on 28 June, 1648 : "I pray God that this nation, and those that are over us, and your Excellency, and all we that are under you, may discern what the mind of God may be in all this, and what our duty is. Surely it is not that the poor godly people of this kingdom should still be made the object of wrath and anger; nor that our God would have our necks under a yoke of bondage. For these things that have lately come to pass have been the wonderful works of God; breaking the rod of the oppressor, as in the day of Midian—not with garments much rolled in blood, but by the terror of the Lord; who will yet save His people and confound His enemies, as on that day."

¹ "Obras Espirituales," Vol. I, p. 139.

VIII. 2.—*Is not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer?*

The Rev. Whitwell Elwin, editor of the "Quarterly Review," wrote in 1854: "I feel an increasing sense of the worthlessness of everything which does not begin and end with God". His views centred round the Bible, of which he had always been a devout and diligent student. After giving a friend some advice about reading, he wrote, in 1850: "The principal matter, after all, is to love and ponder that Book of books, which outweighs in value the united libraries of the world. 'Is not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer?'" His ideal of preaching was Bible exposition.¹

IX. 8, 9.—*The olive-tree.*

"Olive-trees," writes Moncure D. Conway, "are of very ancient sanctity. Noah's dove bearing an olive leaf may have been a symbol of earlier date; at any rate, we find the olive revered by the Israelites in ways bearing no relation to that tradition. In the Temple two doors and two posts were of olive, and from the same tree were carved the two cherubim of the oracle. In Abimelech's fable the olive says, 'Shall I leave my fatness whereby by me they honour God and man?' In the time of David we find a special officer appointed to superintend the olives and sycamores, and among the sacred hills was the Mount of Olives. The word 'Gethsemane' meant 'a press for olive oil'. . . . Its oil fed the sacred lamps. Under Christianity it was the emblem of peace, possibly because it had been, both in Greece and Italy, on account of its durability of growth, the favourite tree to mark the limits of landed property."

When Dr. Herzl, the leader of the Zionist movement, passed away in 1904, his death aroused universal grief among the poor Jews of Eastern Europe. Ten thousand mourners accompanied the funeral to the Vienna cemetery. It was decided that his memorial should take the form of a forest of ten thousand olive-trees, to be planted in some historic spot in Palestine, and to be known as the Herzl Forest.—C. F. ABBOTT.²

XI. 30-40.—*Jephthah's daughter.*

¹ "Memoir," p. 67.

² "Israel in Europe," p. 517.

"The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,
 A maiden pure ; as when she went along
 From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with welcome light,
 With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth : ' Heaven heads the count of crimes
 With that wild oath '. She render'd answer high :
 ' Not so, nor once alone ' ; a thousand times
 I would be born and die.

.
 ' It comforts me in this one thought to dwell,
 That I subdued me to my father's will,
 Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell
 Sweetens the spirit still.

Moreover it is written that my race
 Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from Aroer
 On Arnon unto Minneth.' Here her face
 Glowed, as I look'd at her.

She locked her lips : she left me where I stood ;
 ' Glory to God ' she sang ; and past afar,
 Thridding the sombre boskage of the wood
 Toward the morning-star."

—TENNYSON, "A Dream of Fair Women".

XIII. 24.—*The child grew, and the Lord blessed him.*

Milton, in the passage in the "Reason of Church Government," in which he compares a king to Samson, speaks of "his illustrious and sunny locks waving and curling about his god-like shoulders".

XIV. 8.—*There was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion.*

Bunyan wrote in the Preface to "Grace Abounding": "I have sent you here a drop of that honey that I have taken out of the carcase of a lion. Temptations, when we meet them at first, are as the lion that roared upon Samson ; but if we overcome them, the next time we see them we shall find a nest of honey in them. The Philistines understand me not. . . . I can remember my fears and doubts and sad months with comfort, they are as the head of Goliath in my hand."

“This noble image,” says “Mark Rutherford,” “is an instance, not only of Bunyan’s poetical gift, but of the way in which the Bible serves to add depth to his experiences and to give them utterance.”

XVI. 3.—*And Samson . . . took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them.*

Carlyle wrote to Sterling in 1842 :—

“The inward voice, if it be an *inward* one, and not some false echo of mere *outer* ones, is the prophetic voice of our whole soul and world, saying to us, ‘There, in such a world, that is the thing that *thou* canst do!’ All voices from without, and counter monitions of other men, how prudent and well-meant soever, are in the end but impertinences in comparison. A man has to go, often enough, right in the teeth of all that; all that, often enough, is as the gates of Gaza, which a right Samson, duly surveying the strength of them, and well considering himself, has to walk off with, and carry away on his shoulder. Alas, we are sore hemmed in, all of us, and dwell imprisoned as in Polyphemus caverns in *cases* of triple brass, which we have to break or perish in trying to break!”¹

XVI. 6.—*Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth.*

The text of a sermon by St. Francis de Sales. He taught that the great strength of our Lord and of His servants lay in love.

XVI. 7.—The binding of Samson.

Sir Walter Scott must have been interested, as a boy, in the story of Samson, for Lockhart tells us that he had an answer ready from the Book of Judges for Dr. Adam’s question in the Edinburgh High School, “Is *with* ever a substantive?” “All were silent until the query reached Scott, then near the bottom of the class, who instantly responded by quoting a verse of the Book of Judges: ‘And Samson said unto Delilah, If they bind me with seven green *withs* that were never dried, then shall I be weak and as another man’.”

XVI. 21.—*The Philistines took him.*

“There is no picture in the Bible, or perhaps in all history,”

¹ “New Letters,” Vol. I, p. 253.

says Dr. Marcus Dods, "more pathetic than that of Samson after his fall; the mighty, sunny Samson, the flash of whose eye had unnerved his enemies, fettered now in the Philistine dungeon, deprived of the light of day, set to grind like a woman, and dragged out to be the jest and scorn of his insolent conquerors."¹

From Judges xvi. 21-31, Milton derived the theme of his tragic poem "Samson Agonistes".

John Bright compared the great statesmen whose years are spent in the service of party to Samson toiling in fetters:—

"It is from this fighting with party, and for party, and for the gains which party gives, that there is so little result from the great intellect of such men as these. Like the captive Samson of old, 'They grind in brazen fetters, under task, with their Heaven-gifted strength,' and the country and the world gain little by those faculties which God has given them for the blessing of the country and the world".

THE DEATH OF SAMSON.

xvi. 25-31.—Froude says, after describing the martyrdom of Cranmer: "So perished Cranmer. He was brought out, with the eyes of his soul blinded, to make sport for his enemies, and in his death he brought upon them a wider destruction than he had effected by his teaching while alive. Pole was appointed the next day to the See of Canterbury; but in other respects the Court had over-reached themselves by their cruelty. Had they been contented to accept the recantation, they would have left the Archbishop to die broken-hearted, pointed at by the finger of pitying scorn, and the Reformation would have been disgraced in its champion. They were tempted, by an evil spirit of revenge, into an act unsanctioned even by their own bloody laws; and they gave him an opportunity of redeeming his fame, and of writing his name in the roll of martyrs."

xvi. 30.—*So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.*

From this text Dean Stanley preached in Westminster Abbey a memorial sermon for the Earl of Beaconsfield (1 May, 1881).

¹ "Israel's Iron Age," p. 139.

“He’s short-lived that with his death can do most good.”

—JOHN DONNE.

XVII. 12, 13.—*And Micah consecrated the Levite; and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah. Then said Micah, Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.*

Lord Macaulay, in the third chapter of his “History of England,” describes the position of the chaplain in an English country house of the later seventeenth century. “The coarse and ignorant squire, who thought that it belonged to his dignity to have grace said every day at his table by an ecclesiastic in full canonicals, found means to reconcile dignity with economy. A young Levite—such was the phrase then in use—might be had for his board, a small garret, and ten pounds a year, and might not only perform his own professional functions, might not only be the most patient of butts and of listeners, might not only be always ready in fine weather for bowls, and in rainy weather for shovel-board, but might also save the expense of a gardener or of a groom. Sometimes the reverend man nailed up the apricots, and sometimes he curried the coach horses. He cast up the farrier’s bills. He walked ten miles with a message or a parcel. He was permitted to dine with the family, but he was expected to content himself with the plainest fare. He might fill himself with the corned beef and the carrots; but as soon as the tarts and cheese-cakes made their appearance, he quitted his seat, and stood aloof till he was summoned to return thanks for the repast, from a great part of which he had been excluded.”

THE BOOK OF RUTH.

“THE book is sacred to the lowly and the poor; its *genius loci* is a woman of russet home-bred sweetness—the Hebrew saint of meekness and poverty, with whom if we walk this garden we shall meet with God.”—ARMSTRONG BLACK.

I. 16.—Dominie Sampson, in “Guy Mannering,” quotes this text when he refuses to leave Lucy Bertram in her hour of bereavement and desolation.

“‘And now,’ said the poor girl, ‘I must bid farewell to one of my oldest and kindest friends—God bless you, Mr. Sampson! and requite to you all the kindness of your instructions to your poor pupil, and your friendship to him that is gone! I hope I shall often hear from you.’ She slid into his hand a paper containing some pieces of gold, and rose, as if to leave the room.

“Dominie Sampson also rose; but it was to stand aghast with utter astonishment. The idea of parting from Miss Lucy, go where she might, had never once occurred to the simplicity of his understanding. He laid the money on the table. ‘It is certainly inadequate,’ said MacMorlan, mistaking his meaning, ‘but the circumstances’——

“Mr. Sampson waved his hand impatiently—‘It is not the lucre—it is not the lucre—but that I, that have ate of her father’s loaf, and drank of his cup, for twenty years and more—to think that I am going to leave her—and to leave her in distress and dolour! No, Miss Lucy, you need never think it! You would not consent to put forth your father’s poor dog, and would you use me waur than a messan? No, Miss Lucy Bertram—while I live, I will not separate from you. I’ll be no burden—I have thought how to prevent that. But, as Ruth said unto Naomi, “Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to depart from thee;

for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou dwellest I will dwell ; thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death do part thee and me.” ” ”

II. 11, 12.—The Interpreter said to Mercy :—

“Thy setting out is good, for thou hast given credit to the truth ; thou art ■ Ruth, who did, for the love she bare to Naomi, and to the Lord her God, leave father and mother, and the land of her nativity, to come out, and go with a people that she knew not heretofore. ‘The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.’ ”—JOHN BUNYAN.

Dr. Armstrong Black thus sums up his study of the character of Ruth : “She is, after all is said and done, neither a queen nor a saint—perhaps not even a heroine ; she is pre-eminently the *woman*. But in Ruth womanhood has a suggestion of the angelic, as it finds in duty its delight and in the transient task an opportunity for perfect service.”

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS, AND CHRONICLES.

OF the six historical books we have found 1 Samuel the richest and 1 Chronicles the poorest in illustrations drawn from life and literature. The discrepancy is explained by the many lists of names in Chronicles, and by the fact that so much of the material is there presented for the second time. Edward Irving's reference to "the book of kittle Chronicles"¹ does not surprise the modern reader, though the Puritans, unlike him, were able to "learn about the gospel" from its pages.

On the historical writings of Israel, Prof. Edward Meyer, the foremost expert on the science of the history of antiquity at the University of Berlin, has these remarks:—

"The narratives about David, especially in 2 Samuel ix.-xx., and 1 Kings i. f., show indisputably by their contents that they belong to the time when the events took place, and that the narrator must have been very accurately informed about the doings at court, and about the characters and intrigues of the actors in his story. They could not have been written later than in the time of Solomon." He goes so far as to add: "It is an astonishing thing that a historical literature of this kind should have been possible in Israel at that period. It stands far above every other specimen of ancient Oriental history known to us—above the dry official annals of the Babylonians and Assyrians, and above the legendary stories of Egyptian literature. *It is really genuine history.* Its roots lie in living interest in the actual events which it strives to comprehend and to grasp. The one and only analogy is found on the soil of Greece. Because of its history, the Israelite civilization, alone amongst all others

¹ Difficult ; puzzling.

takes rank from the very beginning as on an equal plane with that of Greece.”¹

When F. W. Robertson was preparing for his Cheltenham class on the Books of Samuel, he had not recourse, his biographer tells us, to the usual commentaries, but to Niebuhr’s Rome and Guizot’s work on civilization, and to books on political economy.

1 SAMUEL.

The story of Hannah and Samuel, with which the Histories open, has its parallel in many biographies. The words “For this child I prayed” (I. 27) remind us of an anecdote told by Mrs. Lyttleton, daughter of Sir Thomas Browne. When the author of “Religio Medici” was an infant, his father used to open his breast when he was asleep, and kiss it in prayers over him, “as ’tis said of Origen’s father, that the Holy Ghost would take possession there”.

Dr. Theodore Cuyler, the distinguished American preacher, compared his own boyhood to that of Samuel. In his infancy his godly mother dedicated him to the Lord. She refused the gift of his grandfather’s law library for the child, saying, “I fully expect that my little boy will yet be a minister”. Late in life Dr. Cuyler placed a memorial window to his mother in Lafayette Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, of which he was founder and pastor for thirty years. The window represented Hannah and the child Samuel, with the inscription, “As long as he liveth I have lent him to the Lord”.²

II. 12.—*Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial.*

Milton had this passage in mind when he described the fallen Angel Belial :—

“Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd
Fell not from heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself; to him no temple stood
Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli’s sons, who filled
With lust and violence the house of God?”³

¹ Quoted by Prof. E. König in his article, “A Modern Expert’s Judgment on the Old Testament Historical Writings,” “Expositor,” April, 1911.

² “Recollections of a Long Life,” p. 7.

³ “Paradise Lost,” Book I.

II. 18.—*Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod.*

“The earliest statue which we know of Marcus” [Aurelius], says F. W. H. Myers, “represents him as a youth offering sacrifice. The earliest story of him, before his adoption into the Imperial family, is of his initiation, at eight years old, as a Salian priest of Mars, when the crowns flung by the other priests fell here and there around the recumbent statue, but the crown which young Marcus threw to him lit and rested on the war-god’s head. The boy-priest, we are told, could soon conduct all the ceremonies of the Salian cult without the usual prompter, for he served in all its offices and knew all its hymns by heart. And it well became him thus to begin by exhibiting the characteristic piety of a child;—who passes in his growing years through the forms of worship, as of thought, which have satisfied his remote forefathers, and ripens himself for his adult philosophies with the consecrated tradition of the past.”

II. 21.—*And the child Samuel grew before the Lord.*

II. 26.—*And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord, and also with men.*

The Rev. Samuel Bickersteth says of his brother Edward, afterwards Bishop of South Tokyo :—

“Spiritually, he was from his earliest years devout. It seems in keeping with his subsequent well-balanced judgment and sagacity that he never passed through any violent epoch of conversion, but ‘grew on before the Lord’. As early as December, 1856, among his father’s memoranda occurs this note, ‘*I trust prayer is a real thing with our boy*’. He was then six and a half years old.”¹

II. 30.—*Them that honour Me I will honour.*

From this text was preached the funeral sermon of Charles Simeon. It was inscribed on the cross erected to the memory of Prof. George Wilson, Director of the Industrial Museum of Scotland, in the Calton burial ground, Edinburgh. This much-loved scientist died at the age of forty-one. His death was regarded as a national misfortune.

III. 10.—*Speak, for thy servant heareth.*

¹ “Life and Letters of Edward Bickersteth,” p. 10.

Henri Perreyve wrote: "The thought that I had given myself to God beforehand preserved me amidst the perils of early youth. I felt as if I bore a mark on my forehead, and that invisible mark restrained me when I was carried away by so many longings and painful circumstances. Amidst temptation an inner voice awoke in my soul and said, 'I cannot'."

IV. 13.—*His heart trembled for the ark of God.*

Amid the conflicts in the Free Church Assembly of 1878, Prof. Robertson Smith referred to the saying of Dr. Begg that "the hearts of the best people in Scotland were trembling for the ark of God". His answer was that "he knew of but one character in Bible history, set up for our instruction, who trembled for the ark of God, and that was Eli—not the most admirable character in the Old Testament—a worldly ecclesiastic. Eli trembled for the ark of God, and why did he tremble? Because for him the ark had ceased to be a shrine of the living, revealing Word of God in the commandments, and had become a fetish, an idol, carried about as if by its power it could assist the Church in its war against the Philistines. He trembled for the ark of God, and as he trembled, he fell and perished. But there was no need to tremble for the ark, because the ark was safe, not in virtue of those outside things he had looked at, but because it was the ark of God's revelation. No man need tremble for that. God's revelation was safe."¹

VI. 10-12.—The carriers of the ark.

When Bunyan was taking leave of his family before his imprisonment, he felt as a man who was pulling down his house upon his wife and children; "yet thought I, I must do it, I must do it; and now I thought on those two milch kine that were to carry the ark of God into another country, and to leave their calves behind them".—"Grace Abounding."

Sebastien Bourdon's picture of "The Return of the Ark from Captivity" is in the National Gallery. Sir E. T. Cook mentions, in his "Handbook," that this painting was a great favourite with Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom it once belonged. "He cited it, together with a picture by Salvator Rosa, to the students of the Academy (Discourse xiv.) as an instance of the

¹ "Life of Principal Rainy" by P. Carnegie Simpson," Vol. I, p. 338.

'poetical style of landscape,' calling particular attention to the 'visionary' character of 'the whole and every part of the scene'."

VII. 12.—*Then Samuel . . . called the name of it Eben-ezer [Stone of Help].*

More than one reference to this verse occurs in Carlyle's letters. He wrote in 1863 to his sister, Mrs. Aitken: "We have surely been *mercifully* dealt with, as our dear Mother used to say! Often when I look around me, and witness the courses of this world, I am filled with a kind of pious terror; and am ready to denominate myself, as I have heard people do in old days, a 'Monument of Mercy'. That is true in spite of all the sorrows and fightings one has."¹

VII. 12.—*Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.*

Carlyle wrote to his mother after his forty-ninth birthday:—

"Dear Mother, many thoughts, sure enough, were in my head all yesterday! This time Nine and forty years, I was a small infant a few hours old, lying unconscious in your kind bosom, you piously rejoicing over me,—appointed to love me while life lasted to us both. What a time to look back, through so many days, marked all with faithful labour by you, with joy and sorrow! I too could weep over them; but we will not weep, dear Mother;—surely we may say withal as the old Hebrew devoutly did, 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!' Yes; for all our sorrows and difficulties, we have not been without help;—neither shall we be."²

Bishop Collins of Gibraltar wrote to a friend:—

"Sometimes a thing . . . which burns deeply into one's own conscience, makes all one's past professions seem almost unreal, and one's righteousness (as it is) filthy rags. Seen by such a standard, all one's confessions have been mere lip-confessions, all one's communions seem almost mockeries, and all life hitherto a hideous sham. Thank God that He does send us such revelations. But then there is a danger lest we, in the excitement of the moment, forget how far the Lord hath helped us hitherto,—how He is the surety that our life hitherto has not been in vain—a danger, in fact, lest we should deny the grace that we have already received.

¹ "New Letters of Thomas Carlyle," Vol. II, p. 216.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 322, 323.

I have known devout penitent souls pull down their Christian life in the desire to undergo such a self-emptying, as they think it. You have no desire to do that, of course, but all the same it is very necessary to learn one's lessons of humiliation and penance without doing despite to what God has done in us already."

ix.—Saul and the kingdom.

"God traps man into nobility, lets him like Saul go far afield in search of asses, that in the height of the search he may burst upon him with the vision of a kingdom. All earnest seekers are in the way of grace; the idlers, the dilettanti, only miss life's lesson and life's blessing."—JAMES MCKECHNIE.¹

ix. 5.—*Saul said to his servant that was with him, Come, and let us return, lest my father leave caring for the asses, and take thought for us.*

x. 2.—*Thy father . . . sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son?*

"Hast thou loved the white locks of thy father, whose sword thou didst guard

When he trusted thee forth with the armies, for glorious reward?

Didst thou kiss the thin hands of thy mother, held up as men sung

The low song of the nearly departed, and hear her faint tongue Joining in while it could to the witness, 'Let one more attest, I have lived, seen God's hand thro' a lifetime, and all was for best!' " ²

ix. 15.—*Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear.*

When Gaspard de Coligny was a prisoner in Ghent, in 1558, Calvin wrote him a letter of comfort. He suggested to the Admiral that God had wished by this affliction to take him apart into a quiet place, so that His voice might be more clearly heard. "For you know full well, Monseigneur, how difficult it is amidst the honours, riches, and powers of this world to lend an ear to God. The reason is that we are too busy here and there and as it were sunk in a swoon, unless He uses means like these to

¹ Meredith's Allegory, "The Shaving of Shagpat," p. 184.

² Browning's "Saul".

reanimate His own. . . . I entreat you, Monseigneur, as God has given you this opportunity of progressing in His school, just as if He had wished to speak privately in your ear—that you will give all pains to appreciate more than ever the worth of His holy doctrine, remembering how precious and how dear it ought to be to us,—and that you will be a diligent reader of His holy Word.”¹

XII. 24.—*Consider how great things he hath done for you.*

Dr. A. B. Davidson remarks: “Just as many took in hand to set forth the sayings and miracles of Christ, so many, all over the nation of Israel, set forth the *magnalia Dei* in its history. A nation does not forget.”²

XVI. 4.—*And Samuel . . . came to Beth-lehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said Comest thou peaceably?*

Bunyan tells us that amid his years of greatest darkness of soul he “trembled at the sight of the saints of God, especially at those that greatly loved Him, and that made it their business to walk continually with Him in this world; for they did, both in their words, their carriages, and all their expressions of tenderness and fear to sin against their precious Saviour, condemn, lay guilt upon, and also add continual affliction and shame upon my soul. *The dread of them was upon me, and I trembled at God’s Samuels.*”³

XVI. 16.—*He shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.*

“Partly nature, partly time and study,” wrote Matthew Arnold, “have by this time taught me thoroughly the precious truth that everything turns upon one’s exercising the power of *persuasion*, of *charm*, that without this all fury, energy, reasoning power, acquirement, are thrown away and only render their owner more miserable.”⁴

THE QUALITY OF PRUDENCE.

XVI. 18 (with 2 Chron. II. 12).—David was recommended to Saul as “a man of war and prudent in matters and a comely

¹ Date of letter, 4 September, 1558.

² “Biblical and Literary Essays,” p. 318.

³ “Grace Abounding.”

⁴ Letter to his mother, 29 October, 1863.

person". So in 2 Chronicles II. 12 Hiram the king of Tyre wrote to Solomon: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, endued with prudence and understanding."

When Ignatius Loyola was past sixty, infirm, and broken in health, he used to say that at a sign from the Pope he would take his staff and go on foot into Spain, or embark on the first vessel he found at Ostia, without oars or sails or provisions, not only willingly but with joy. A nobleman who heard this said, in surprise, "But where would be the prudence of doing this?" "Prudence, my lord," replied Loyola, "is the virtue of those who command, not of those who obey."

XVII. 32.—*Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.*

"Necessity," says Bunyan, "gave David a call. Is there not a cause, saith he, lies bleeding upon the ground, and no man of heart or spirit to put a check to the bold blasphemer? I will go fight with him. I will put my life in my hand; if I die, I die."

XVII. 36.—*Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear.*

In the annals of Port-Royal we read that a young soldier of noble family, M. de Luzanci, son of M. d'Andilly, wrote at the age of eighteen to the imprisoned Abbé de Saint-Cyran, asking whether it would be allowable, now that God had touched his heart and inclined him to enter on a religious retreat, for him to continue his usual recreation of hunting, so that none might fancy he had turned to religion through slothful desires. The wise Saint-Cyran granted permission. "At your age," he wrote, "David had already heard the call of God, yet he continued to hunt lions and bears, and as he killed them, he imagined to himself the victories of the righteous over evil spirits."¹

XVIII. 3.—*Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.*

David Livingstone on his visit to London in 1838 won the friendship of the Rev. Joseph Moore, afterwards a missionary at Tahiti, and later of Congleton in Cheshire. Nine years later Livingstone wrote as follows to Mr. Moore from Africa: "Of all those I have met since we parted, I have seen no one I can

¹ Sainte-Beuve, "Port-Royal," Vol. II, p. 6.

compare to you for sincere, hearty fellowship". Livingstone's family used to speak of them as Jonathan and David.¹

XVIII. 7.—*And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.*

A courteous use of this verse was made by the poet Crabbe in a letter to Walter Scott, dated 13 October, 1812.

"Mr. Hatchard," he wrote, "tells me that he hopes or expects that thousands will read my 'Tales,' and I am convinced that your publisher might in like manner so speak of your ten thousands; but this, though it calls to mind the passage, is no true comparison with the related prowess of David and Saul, because I have no evil spirit to arise and trouble me on the occasion; though if I had, I know no David whose skill is so likely to allay it."

XXI. 9.—*There is none like that; give it me.*

Bunyan says, in the Preface to "Grace Abounding": "I can remember my fears and doubts, and sad months, with comfort; they are as the head of Goliath in my hand; there was nothing to David like Goliath's sword, even that sword that should have been sheathed in his bowels; for the very sight and remembrance of that did preach forth God's deliverance to him. Oh! the remembrance of my great sins, of my great temptations, and of my great fear of perishing for ever! They bring afresh into my mind the remembrance of my great help, my great supports from heaven, and the great grace that God extended to such a wretch as I."

"How carefully (says Richard Baxter) preserve we those prizes which, with the greatest hazard, we gained from the enemy! Goliath's sword must be kept as a trophy, and laid up behind the ephod; and in a time of need David says, 'There is none to that'. Surely when we do divide the spoil and partake of the prize which our Lord so dearly won, we shall say indeed, 'There is none to that'."

XXI. 13.—*[David] feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.*

¹ Dr. Blaikie's "Life of Livingstone," p. 25.

Dr. Livingstone, in one of his private journals, gives a curious illustration of this passage. He was greatly interested, during his second visit home in 1864, in listening to his mother's stories. "Mother told me stories of her youth (he says); they seem to come back to her in her eighty-second year very vividly. Her grandfather, Gavin Hunter, could write, while most common people were ignorant of the art. A poor woman got him to write a petition to the minister of Shotts parish to augment her monthly allowance of sixpence, as she could not live on it. He was taken to Hamilton jail for this, and having a wife and three children at home, who without him would certainly starve, he thought of David's feigning madness before the Philistines, and beslobbered his beard with saliva. All who were found guilty were sent to the army in America, or the plantations. A sergeant had compassion on him and said, 'Tell me, gudeman, if you are really out of your mind. I'll befriend you.' He confessed that he only feigned insanity, because he had a wife and three bairns at home who would starve if he were sent to the army. 'Dinna say onything mair to onybody,' said the kind-hearted sergeant. He then said to the commanding officer, 'They have given us a man clean out of his mind; I can do nothing with the like o' him'. The officer went to him and gave him three shillings, saying, 'Tak' that, gudeman, and gang awa' hame to your wife and weans'. 'Ay,' said mother, 'mony a prayer went up for that sergeant, for my grandfather was an unco godly man. He had never so much money in his life before, for his wages were only three pence a day.'"¹

xxii. 1.—*The cave of Adullam.*

Once Dr. Andrew Bonar went to see an old bedridden man who reminded him of a sermon he had preached ten years before. "I mind," the old man said, "you spoke about the cave of Adullam. 'Do you like the Cave and do you like the Captain? Then come in—come in—no other condition.' Man, *it sank into my heart like oil.*"²

xxiv. 17.—*And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.*

¹ Dr. Blaikie's "Life of Livingstone," p. 8.

² "Reminiscences of Dr. Andrew Bonar," pp. 24, 25.

XXIV. 19.—*The Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.*

“He is Saul, ye remember in glory—ere error had bent
The broad brow from the daily communion; and still, though
much spent,
Be the life and the bearing that front you, the same, God did
choose,

To receive what a man may waste, desecrate, never quite lose.”¹

xxv. 6.—*Peace be to this house.*

“The habit of employing some religious symbol, or writing some religious legend, over the door of the house (Ruskin says), does not entirely disappear until far into the period of the Renaissance. The words, ‘Peace be to this house,’ occur on one side of a Veronese gateway, with the appropriate and veracious inscription S. P. Q. R., on a Roman Standard, on the other; and ‘Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,’ is written on one of the doorways of a building added at the flank of the Casa Barbarigo, in the sixteenth or seventeenth century.”

Edward Irving’s greeting was “Peace be to this house,” as he visited among the poor of the Gallowgate in Glasgow.

xxviii. 11-20.—The witch calling up Samuel.

“From my childhood,” says Charles Lamb in his essay on “Witches and other Night-Pieces,” “I was extremely inquisitive about witches and witch-stories. . . . In my father’s book-closet the history of the Bible by Stackhouse occupied a distinguished station. The pictures with which it abounds—one of the Ark, in particular, and another of Solomon’s temple, delineated with all the fidelity of ocular admeasurement, as if the artist had been upon the spot—attracted my childish attention. There was a picture, too, of the witch raising up Samuel, which I wish that I had never seen.”

Coleridge suggests in his “Table Talk” that the calling up of Samuel was a trick of ventriloquism, “got up by the courtiers and friends of Saul, to prevent him, if possible, from hazarding an engagement with an army despondent and oppressed with bodings of defeat. Saul is not said to have seen Samuel; the

¹ Browning’s “Saul”.

woman only pretends to see him. And then what does this Samuel do? He merely repeats the prophecy known to all Israel, which the true Samuel had uttered some years before. Read Captain Lyon's account of the scene in the cabin with the Esquimaux bladder, or conjurer; it is impossible not to be reminded of the witch of Endor."

xxviii. 15.—*Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?*

St. John of the Cross quotes this text as an instance of the Divine displeasure with those who seek to gain knowledge by penetrating into the supernatural world. He says that God has placed for every creature natural and rational boundaries for its government, and is displeased when the soul wanders outside its true limits. Although the prayer, as in Saul's case, is sometimes granted, the Divine displeasure with his action is clearly shown in the words of Samuel.

xxx. 6.—*So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.*

The Baron of Bradwardine said, in the darkest hour of his fortunes: "To be sure, we may say with Virgilius Maro, 'Fuimus Troes'—and there's the end of an auld sang. But houses and families and men have a' stood lang enough when they have stood till they fall with honour." ¹

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

i. 14.—*How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?*

The story of the Amalekite who boasted that he had slain Saul has a remarkable parallel in South African history. It is given in full by Sir H. Rider Haggard in his novel "Child of Storm" (1913). "It was from Mr. Fynney," he says, "that I heard the story of the execution by Cetewayo of the man who appeared before him with the ornaments of Umbelazi, announcing that he had killed the prince with his own hand. Of course, this tale, as Mr. Quatermain points out, bears a striking resemblance to that recorded in the Old Testament in connexion with the death of King Saul. It by no means follows, however, that it is therefore apocryphal; indeed, Mr. Fynney assured me

¹ "Waverley," ch. LXV.

that it was quite true, although if he gave me his authorities, I cannot remember them after a lapse of more than thirty years."

The brothers Cetewayo and Umbelazi went to war, and Cetewayo conquered after a desperate battle. An insolent stranger, "a stout man arrayed in a very fine war dress, and waving in one hand a gory spear and in the other a head-plume of ostrich feathers," claimed that he had slain the noble Umbelazi. He showed the plume as that of "the dead dog Umbelazi," and demanded his reward from the victorious chief. "Yes," answered Cetewayo, "a great reward. Hearken, Jackal and Traitor. Your own words bear witness against you. You, you have dared to lift your hand against the blood-royal, and with your foul tongue to heap lies and insults upon the name of the mighty dead."

Cetewayo ordered the execution of the vain boaster. Sir H. Rider Haggard says, in recounting the incident, with its Old Testament parallel: "What David's exact motives were, naturally I cannot tell; but it is easy to guess those of Cetewayo, who, although he could make war upon his brother to secure the throne, did not think it wise to let it go abroad that the royal blood might be lightly spilt".

1. 23.—Dean Burgon removed the coffin of his little sister, Catharine Margaret, who died at the age of seven, from St. Stephen's, Walbrook, to Holywell Cemetery in Oxford, where her parents rested. He composed a Latin inscription for her final resting-place, and a translation, in which these words occur: "Her sacred remains I removed at the end of thirty-one years from the church of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, in London, to this place, in order that close beside her parents, whom she loved so dearly, she, their deeply lamented daughter, might rest. For our dearest mother sleeps in peace in the adjoining grave, and at her left hand sleeps our father also. 'They were lovely in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided'.

"O ye who succeed us, I implore and adjure you by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, disturb not these so dear remains. O reader, O bystander, one and all, O disturb them not." ¹

¹ "Life of Dean Burgon," Vol. II, p. 23.

I. 26.—St. Bonaventura, one of the successors of St. Francis, died on 15 July, 1276, some three months after St. Thomas Aquinas. He was universally beloved and mourned. Cardinal Peter, of Tarentaise, afterwards Pope Innocent V, preached his funeral sermon from the words: “I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan, very pleasant hast thou been unto me, thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women”.

III. 1.—*David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.*

“If the house of David is to wax stronger, the house of Saul must wax weaker from day to day. And hence it is that every fuller development of Christ’s spirit within man necessarily takes a self-subduing character, making asceticism under one form or another inseparable from the true Christian life. For the glory of the terrestrial is one, the glory of the celestial is another. The triumph of Nature lies in the carrying out of its own will, in identification with some great object, in adhesion to some lofty aim. The triumph of Christ is placed in the subjugation of that very will, in acquiescence, in disentanglement, in the stretching forth of the hands, so that another may gird us, and carry us whither we would not.”—DORA GREENWELL.¹

III. 38.—*Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?*

On the day when John Brown was murdered by Claverhouse, that weird prophet, Alexander Peden, “was about ten or eleven miles distant, having been in the fields all night”. Patrick Walker tells us that he came to the house of his host betwixt seven and eight, and desired to call in the family, that he might pray amongst them. He said: “‘Lord, when wilt thou avenge Brown’s blood? Oh, let Brown’s blood be precious in Thy sight, and hasten the day when thou shalt avenge it, with Cameron’s, Cargill’s, and many others of our martyrs’ names, and O for that day when the Lord would avenge all their bloods’. When ended, John Muirhead inquired what he meant by Brown’s blood; he said twice over, ‘What do I mean? Claverhouse has been at the Preshill this morning, and has cruelly murdered John Brown; his corps are lying at the end of his house, and his poor wife

¹ “The Patience of Hope.”

sitting weeping by his corps, and not a soul to speak comfortably to her. This morning after the sun-rising I saw a strange apparition in the firmament; the appearance of a very bright clear-shining star fall from heaven to the earth, and indeed there is a clear-shining light fallen this day, the greatest Christian that ever I conversed with.' ”¹

Mr. Cargill preached “a tearful sermon” for the death of Richard Cameron, on the text, “Know ye not that there is a great man and prince fallen this day in Israel?”²

This text was quoted by Dr. Kawerau at the beginning of his memorial pamphlet on C. H. Spurgeon.

v. 24.—*The sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees.*

F. W. H. Myers remarks, in his essay on Greek Oracles: “We may liken the Dodonean ‘voiceful oak’ to the tamarisks of Beersheba and the oak of Shechem—its whisper to the ‘sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees,’ which prompted Israel to war, and so on down the long train of memories to Joan of Arc, hanging with garlands the fairies’ beech in the woods of Domremy, and telling her persecutors that if they would set her in a forest once more she would hear the heavenly voices plain.”

vii. 20.—*And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Lord God, knowest Thy servant* (with 1 Kings viii. 17.—*It was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel*).

1 Kings viii. 18.—*Thou didst well that it was in thine heart.*

Froissart tells us that when Robert Bruce was dying, he called to him the brave and gentle knight, Sir James Douglas, and said, before the rest of the courtiers: “Sir James, my dear friend, none knows better than you how great labour and suffering I have undergone in my day, for the maintenance of the rights of my kingdom; and when I was hardest beset, I made a vow, which it now grieves me deeply that I have not accomplished; I vowed to God, that if I should live to see an end

¹ “Six Saints of the Covenant,” Vol. I, p. 87.

² *Ibid.*, p. 231.

of my wars, and be enabled to govern this realm in peace and security, I would then set out in person, and carry on war against the enemies of my Lord and Saviour, to the best of my power. Never has my heart ceased to bend to this point, but our Lord has not consented thereto; and now at the last, I am seized with this grievous sickness, so that, as you all see, I have nothing to do but to die. And since my body cannot go thither and accomplish that which my heart so much desired, I have resolved to send my heart there, in place of my body, to fulfil my vow".¹

Shakespeare puts these words into the mouth of King Henry IV when dying :—

"Doth any name particular belong

Unto the lodging where I first did swoon ?

Warwick.—"Tis called Jerusalem, my noble lord.

K. Henry.—Laud be to God ! even there my life must end.

It hath been prophesied to me many years,

I should not die but in Jerusalem,

Which vainly I supposed the Holy Land—

But, bear me to that chamber ; there I'll lie ;

In that Jerusalem shall Harry die."

x. 12.—*Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God : and the Lord do that which seemeth him good.*

Melanchthon quoted this text in a letter which he wrote in the spring of 1525 to his friend Joachim Camerarius, who had been troubled with anxieties as to his own religious state. The Wittenberg professor, at that time aged twenty-eight, wrote to Camerarius, aged twenty-five, as an elder brother to a younger. Only a few days earlier he had claimed the sympathy of his friend, for he was himself suffering so severely from insomnia that he had been obliged to interrupt his public lectures. In the letter of 23 March we read the sad words : "Although I find comfort in my little daughter, in my newly born baby, and in my wife, yet when I think of the state of my health, and consider what danger they would be in, if——" and here he breaks off, "but I must not use ill-omened words about myself." The letter of 23 March is that of an invalid, but within the

¹ Patrick Fraser Tytler, "History of Scotland," Vol. I, p. 357.

next few days he received a letter from Camerarius, in which the younger scholar told of spiritual conflicts. Philip thereupon wrote him a long letter of consolation, in which these words occur: "Do not question anxiously about the purposes of God for you, but use with devout and grateful heart those blessings that He has given, and go on doing your duty. Let Him care for all the rest, as Joab said to his brother in 2 Samuel x." Melanchthon quoted a few lines further on the words of Romans xii. 12: "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer". "Will you deny, Joachim, that your Father cares for you? Perhaps you will answer that your mind does not yet feel His kindness. The reason is that the light is obscured by mental trouble, and by these anxious questionings, but it will break forth and shine once more in God's good time."¹

Well may a German writer say that the sixteenth century shows no example of a friendship more intimate, more tender, and more full of mutual help than that of Camerarius and Melanchthon.

xii. 23.—*I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*

Dr. John Brown, in his "Letter to John Cairns, D.D.," tells of the deep sorrow which befel his father, Dr. John Brown, the saintly minister of Broughton Place Church, Edinburgh, on the death of his daughter Maggie, who passed away with "her little forefinger playing to the last with my father's silvery curls, her eyes trying in vain to brighten his."

"It was on a Sabbath morning she died, and he was all day at church, not many yards from where lay her little corpse alone in the house. His colleague preached in the forenoon, and in the afternoon he took his turn, saying before beginning his discourse, 'It has pleased the Father of Lights to darken one of the lights of my dwelling—had the child lived I would have remained with her, but now I have thought it right to arise and come into the house of the Lord and worship'."

xvi. 11, 12.—The cursing of Shimei.

When Shimei cast stones at David and cursed him, the king said: "Let him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord

¹ "Corp. Ref.," Vol. I, cols. 734-6.

hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day."

These words were mentioned by Erasmus in a letter written shortly before his death to Melanchthon (6 June, 1536). After referring to the attacks of his enemies, the aged scholar wrote: "I apply to myself the words of David when he was attacked with stones and with curses harder than any stone: 'Dominus præcipit illis ut maledicerent mihi: quis scit an misereatur mei?' " ¹

XVIII. 33.—*Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son.*

King David's love for his son Absalom is recalled by Sir Walter Scott in his picture of the grief of King Robert III of Scotland when he hears from his treacherous brother Albany of the death of his elder son, the Duke of Rothsay, at Falkland.

"'He is dead!—he is dead!' screamed the agonized parent. 'Albany, as thy brother, I conjure thee—But no—I am thy brother no longer! As thy King, dark and subtle man, I charge thee to tell the worst!'

"Albany faltered out,—'The details are but imperfectly known to me—but the certainty is, that my unhappy nephew was found dead in his apartment last night from sudden illness—as I have heard'.

"'O Rothsay!—O my beloved David!—Would to God I had died for thee, my son—my son!'

"So spoke, in the emphatic words of Scripture, the helpless and bereft father, tearing his grey beard and hoary hair, while Albany, speechless and conscience-struck, did not venture to interrupt the tempest of his grief."²

Dr. Chalmers said: "I feel sure that the use of the sacred dialogues as a school book, and the pictures of Scripture scenes which interested my boyhood, still cleave to me, and impart a peculiar tinge and charm to the same representations when brought within my notice". He was but three years old, when one evening, after it had grown dark, missed and sought for, he was found alone in the nursery, pacing up and down, excited

¹ "Corp. Ref.," Vol. III, col. 88.

² "The Fair Maid of Perth," ch. xxxv.

and absorbed, repeating to himself as he walked to and fro the words of David—"O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!"

Sir Thomas Browne, in his "Urn Burial," remarks on this verse: "Whether that mournful burthen and treble calling out after Absalom had any reference to the last clamoration and triple valediction used by other nations, we hold but a wavering conjecture."

XIX. 14.—*And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man.*

Matthew Arnold wrote in 1883:—

"'Magnum telum ad res gerendas existimare oportet benevolentiam civium,'¹ says Cicero, and how true it is and what a pedant is Mommsen, who runs this charming personage down."²

XIX. 18.—*And there went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household.*

This text has often been applied to the passing of the King's household over the river of death.

It was a dream of the ancient inhabitants of the Nile valley that a departed Pharaoh must cross the Lily-lake in a ferryman's barque. "To the dweller along the Nile," says Prof. Breasted,³ "the most obvious way to cross the Lily-lake is to embark in a ferry-boat; we find it among the rushes of the lake-shore with the ferryman standing in the stern to pole it rapidly along." If on reaching the farther shore, the king finds himself without any messenger to despatch to Re, the chief god, "the ferryman may be induced to announce his coming". But the monarch ought not to depend on such chance service. John Bunyan imagined that there was one Vain-hope, a ferryman, waiting for Ignorance on the bank of the River. "He soon got over and that without half that difficulty which the other two men met with." But there were no Shining Ones to greet Ignorance on the farther shore, "neither did any man meet him with the least encouragement". He ascended the hill to come up to the gate, "only he came alone".

¹ We should regard the goodwill of our fellow-citizens as a very important weapon to help us in carrying on affairs.

² "Letters," Vol. II, p. 216.

³ "Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt," p. 105.

The ideal of the Shining Ones who meet the holy pilgrims, Christian and Hopeful, as they draw near the gate, has its parallel in Egyptian story. "The gods crowd down to the shore," says Prof. Breasted, in his description of a Pharaoh's entrance at the celestial gates. "This king Pepi found the gods standing, wrapped in their garments, their white sandals on their feet. They cast off their white sandals to the earth, they throw off their garments. 'Our heart was not glad until thy coming,' say they."

XIX. 36.—*Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king ; and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward ?*

"Sympathy is dear, very dear to me ; but the sympathy of a poet, and of such a poet, is the quintessence of sympathy to me ! Will you take back my gratitude for it ?—agreeing, too, that of all the commerce done in the world, from Tyre to Carthage, the exchange of sympathy for gratitude is the most princely thing ?" ¹

XXI. 10.—A writer on Dean Burgon in the "Record" for 17 August, 1888, made the following note on his reading of Scripture :—

"Dean Burgon never took liberties. He was as careful of the honour and reputation of a character in Holy Scripture as of his dearest living friends. I once heard him read the description of Rizpah's care for her dead children, from the Sunday lesson in the Second Book of Samuel. It was a thing never to be forgotten. As one said who was present, 'He read it as though she had been his own sister,' and so it was throughout." ²

XXI. 17.—*Then the men of David sware unto him, saying, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel.*

Frederick Myconius or Mecum, Lutheran pastor at Gotha in the Reformation time, was disabled in mid life by a lingering consumption. Some letters of consolation were written to him by Melanchthon. On 12 January, 1542, the Wittenberg

¹ "E. B. Barrett to Robert Browning" (11 Jan. 1845).

² "Life of Dean Burgon," Vol. I, p. 278.

professor recalled the services rendered to the State by King David in his later years. "Although David in his old age, worn out with years and labours, no longer took his place with the soldiers in the field, yet he performed more difficult and more useful tasks. He fought in spirit, and guided with his counsels the hands of generals and soldiers. By his authority he preserved concord among the leaders and the armies. At home he directed Church and State. He committed to writing the heavenly doctrine of the Son of God; he enacted laws which were useful for discipline and peace. These services were far greater than his conquest of that terrible giant whom he met as a young man, i.e. at the age of twenty-two. So, my Frederick, though your voice is not now strong enough for public sermons, you may yet serve the Church in spirit by your counsels, by exhorting and teaching, in a word, by all that diligent effort which you are actually making. So put sadness away from your heart, and take care of your health for the sake of the Church and your own people."¹

XXIII. 3, 4.—*The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springeth out of the earth by clear shining after rain.*

From this text Bishop Burnet preached at the Coronation of William III and Mary II in Westminster Abbey.

XXIII. 8.—*The same was Adino the Eznite: he lift up his spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time.*

Luther remarked on this verse: "Does it seem likely that one man could in one battle have killed eight hundred? It would certainly be incredible to me, if the Bible did not say so. The angels must have given trusty aid both to him and Samson." —E. KROKER.²

XXIII. 15.—*And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, which is by the gate.*

Lady Frances Balfour tells us that Dr. MacGregor thanked

¹ "Corp. Ref.," Vol. IV, cols. 754, 755.

² "Luthers Tischreden," No. 142.

God that his eyes had opened on hills and woods, and that he had never lived in a house from which he could not see trees. He always affirmed he would die in a week if he lived in a street with houses opposite. . . . The well which was by his father's house [near Scone, in Perthshire] gave its name, not in vain, to a gushing spring of the coldest water. In many a fevered and waking hour he was wont to repeat, "Oh that one would give me drink at the water of the well at the home of my childhood". When he revisited Spoutwells, near the close of his life, the grass-grown and neglected well head was the greatest change that his fond remembrance noticed—"It was not his well".¹

XXIII. 16.—*He would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord.*

"From prairie cabin up to Capitol
One fair ideal led our chieftain on,
For evermore he burned to do his deed
With the fine stroke and gesture of a king."²

XXIII. 16.—*The three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem.*

Mystical writers say that these mighty men were types of the three wise men who came to the Saviour's cradle at Bethlehem with their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Sir Walter Scott remarks, in "The Talisman," on the difficulty with which the Crusaders in Palestine procured food and drink. "The Crusaders had to purchase the means of sustaining life by life itself; and water, like that of the well of Bethlehem, longed for by King David, one of its ancient monarchs, was then, as before, only obtained by the expenditure of blood."

XXIV. 14-17.—Evelyn wrote from Say's Court, Deptford, amidst the ravages of the plague in September, 1665:—

"It was Saturday last ere my courageous wife could be persuaded to take the alarm, but she is now fled, with most of my family. If the malignity of this sad contagion spend no faster before winter, the calamity will be indescribable. My very heart turns within me at the contemplation of our calamity. God

¹ "Dr. MacGregor of St. Cuthbert's," p. 3.

² Poem on Abraham Lincoln, quoted in the Later Letters of Marcus Dods, p. 130.

give the repentance of David to the times of David! We have all added some weights to this burden; Ingratitude and Luxurie, and the too, too soon oblivion of Miracles."

XXIV. 17.—*And David spake unto the Lord when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let Thine hand, I pray thee, be against me and against my father's house.*

When the Tsar Alexander I was dying, he heard of a political conspiracy directed against his family. The ingratitude of some who had received their education and special favour at the Emperor's hands, seemed to affect him painfully. "But what else could I expect? it is a just retribution," he exclaimed to himself. "Almighty God, may Thy judgments fall on me alone, and not on my people."¹

THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS.

Lord Rosebery tells us that during Napoleon's exile at St. Helena, he loved to hear the Bible read aloud. "The reading was not always for the highest motive, for on one occasion he reads up the books of Samuel and Kings to see what is their testimony in favour of legitimate monarchy."²

DAVID AND SOLOMON.

II.—Luther wrote in 1520 to Gerard Listrius at Zwolle: "I lose these years of mine in unhappy wars and would like all my works to perish, lest they should become obstacles to pure theology and better geniuses, although to-day I expound my philosophy without slaughter and blood. It is my fate that evil beasts attack me alone, all seeking to win the laurel and palm from me. God grant that I may be David pouring out blood, but that Melanchthon may be Solomon reigning in peace, Amen."

i. 34-39.—The anointing of Solomon in David's lifetime.

The Emperor Charles V resigned the dominions of the House of Burgundy to his son Philip II, in October, 1555. The scene of his abdication was the hall of the castle of Caudenberg, the

¹ C. Joynville, "Life and Times of Alexander I," Vol. III, p. 357.

² "Napoleon: The Last Phase," p. 175.

ancient palace of the Dukes of Brabant. Addressing his heir, the Emperor said : " Other kings reckon themselves fortunate to be able, at the hour of their death, to place their crowns on their children's head ; I wish to enjoy this happiness in my life, and to see you reign. My conduct will have few imitators, as it has few examples ; but it will be praised if you justify my confidence, if you do not decline in the wisdom you have hitherto displayed, and if you continue to be the strenuous defender of the Catholic faith, and of law and justice, which are the strength and the bulwarks of empire. May you also have a son to whom you may, in turn, transmit your power."¹

III. 9-11.—*The prayer of Solomon.*

In taking the oath of office, the American Presidents kiss the Bible, and they often press their lips to some selected passage. The verses chosen by President Taft were those of Solomon's prayer : " Give therefore Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad ; for who is able to judge this Thy so great a people ? "

President McKinley, at his first inauguration, chose the parallel passage in 1 Chronicles i. 10. For his second term of office he chose Proverbs xvi. 20-21.

III. 13.—*I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour.*

" We completely misunderstand the religion of the Old Testament," says Prof. König, " if we suppose that it demanded a renunciation of property or of the enjoyment of the blessings of nature and the gifts of civilization. No prophet of the Old Testament represented the so-called ' Bedouin ideal ' ."²

VI. 7.—*And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither : so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.*

There is a noteworthy illustration of this text in Lockhart's " Life of Scott ". At Oxford, in 1803, Scott first met Reginald Heber, in after-days the apostolic Bishop of Calcutta. " He had just been declared the successful competitor for that year's

¹ W. Stirling-Maxwell, " The Cloister Life of Charles V ".

² " Expositor," April, 1911.

poetical prize, and read to Scott at breakfast, in Brasenose College, the MS. of his 'Palestine'. Scott observed that in the verses on Solomon's Temple one striking circumstance had escaped him, namely, that no tools were used in its erection. Reginald retired for a few minutes to the corner of the room, and returned with the beautiful lines :—

“ ‘ No hammer fell, no ponderous axes rung,
Like some tall palm the mystic fabric sprung.
Majestic silence,’ etc.”

x. 15.—*The traffick of the spice merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia, and of the governors of the country.*

Milton had breathed the odour of sweet spices from many passages of the Old Testament. As the lost Angel approaches Eden, he feels the breath of odoriferous gales.

“ As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mozambic, off' at sea north-east winds blow
Sabean odours from the spicy shores
Of Araby the Blest ; with such delay
Well pleased, they slack their course, and many a league
Cheer'd with the grateful smell, old Ocean smiles ;
So entertained those odorous sweets the fiend
Who came their bane.”

xii. 4.—The English Translators of 1611 wrote in their Preface :—

“ Solomon was greater than David, though not in vertue, yet in power ; and by his power and wisdom he built a Temple to the Lord, such a one as was the glory of the land of Israel and the wonder of the whole world. But was that his magnificence liked of by all ? We doubt of it. Otherwise, why doe they lay it in his sonnes dish, and call unto him for easing of the burden. *Make*, say they, *the grievous servitude of thy father, and his sore yoke lighter*. Belike he had charged them with some levies and troubled them with some cariages ; Hereupon they raise up a tragedie, and wish in their heart the Temple had never bene built. So hard a thing it is to please all, even when we please God best, and doe seeke to approve ourselves to every ones conscience.”

xvii. 4.—*I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.*

St. Meinrad of Einsiedeln, according to tradition, made pets of two young ravens whom he fed from his hand with crumbs from his scanty meal. Two ravens also attached themselves to St. Benedict. If the old legends are true, these birds did not bring food to the saints, but they brought the not less precious gift of companionship—"something to love".

xvii. 5.—*He went and dwelt by the brook Cherith* (with St. Matt. iv. 2.—*And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterwards an hungered*).

Charles Lamb wrote in his essay on "Grace Before Meat":—

"To the temperate fantasies of the famished son of God, what sort of feasts presented themselves? He dreamed indeed,—

—As appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.

But what meats?

Him thought he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing even and morn;
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought.
He saw the prophet also how he fled
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how awaked
He found his supper on the coals prepared,
And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
And ate the second time after repose,
The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:
Sometimes, that with Elijah he partook
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

Nothing in Milton is finelier fancied than these temperate dreams of the Divine Hungerer."

xvii. 12.—*The widow's cruse.*

"No use measuring the oil in the widow's cruse unless you can also measure the oil that may come into it. It is a miraculous cruse, in touch with, tapping all the resources of oil there are. The measure of the widow's need of and receptacles to

store the oil—that is the measure of the oil. So with man's powers. They are determined by his needs and receptivities."—JAMES McKECHNIE.¹

Phillips Brooks wrote about the age of twenty-one in a private note-book: "A noble principle or thought, like the widow's barrel and cruse, is never dry. We draw on it for our daily life, we drink of its power in our weakness, and taste its power in our despair; but God's blessing is on it, and the fullness of His truth is filling it, and so it never fails. We come back to it in our next weakness or our next despondency, and find it thoughtful and hopeful as ever, till the famine is over, and, kept alive and nurtured by its strength, we come forth to gather new harvests of great thoughts."²

XVII. 22.—*And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came unto him again, and the child revived.*

In Sir Walter Scott's "Monastery" this passage is a subject of controversy between the Protestant minister, Henry Warden, and his antagonist and old college friend, the Sub-Prior Eustace of Kennaquhair (ch. xxxi.) :—

" 'Go, then,' said Father Eustace to Edward; 'let thy sorrowing mother know that her son is restored to her from the grave, like the child of the widow of Zarephath; at the intercession,' he added, looking at Henry Warden, 'of the blessed Saint whom I invoked in his behalf.'

" 'Deceived thyself,' said Warden, instantly, 'thou art a deceiver of others. It was no dead man, no creature of clay, whom the blessed Tishbite invoked, when, stung by the reproach of the Shunammite woman, he prayed that her son's soul might come into him again.'

" 'It was by his intercession, however,' repeated the Sub-Prior; 'for what says the Vulgate? Thus it is written: *Et exaudivit Dominus vocem Helie; et reversa est anima pueri intra eum, et revixit*; and thinkest thou the intercession of a glorified saint is more feeble than when he walks on earth, shrouded in a tabernacle of clay, and seeing but with the eye of flesh?' "

xix. 2.—"Elijah," said Dean Burgon, "was the first pilgrim

¹ Meredith's Allegory, "The Shaving of Shagpat," p. 67.

² "Life of Phillips Brooks," Vol. I, p. 186.

—to Sinai ; it was a forty days' journey from Beersheba where he dwelt under a juniper tree."

XIX. 4.—James Gilmour of Mongolia wrote on one of his solitary journeys :—

"To-day I felt a good deal like Elijah in the wilderness, when the reaction came on after his slaughter of the priests of Baal. He prayed that he might die. I wonder if I am telling the truth when I say that I felt drawn towards suicide. I take this opportunity of declaring strongly that on all occasions two missionaries should go together. I was not of this opinion a few weeks ago, but I had no idea how weak an individual I am. My eyes have filled with tears frequently these last few days in spite of myself, and I do not wonder in the least that Grant's brother shot himself. *Oh ! the intense loneliness of Christ's life*, not a single one understood Him ! He bore it. O Jesus, let me follow in Thy steps and have in me the same spirit that Thou hadst."

THE JUNIPER-TREE.

XIX. 4.—Moncure D. Conway wrote in "Fraser's Magazine" for 1870, under the title "Mystic Trees and Flowers" :—

"The German legend of the juniper-tree has been a favourite subject with comparative mythologists. A little boy is tempted into a chest by an apple, and there slain by his step-mother, who then, having made a soup of his flesh for her husband, burns the bones under a juniper. The juniper burns, and a bird leaps from it, which goes about singing the story of the crime. After letting fall various gifts on his kind sister and a millstone on the head of the stepmother, the child is resuscitated amidst flames from the bird form. In the fable of Osiris, the chest, the tree, and the bird are found. . . . Are there not some traces of the same fable in the story of Elijah, who, when threatened with death by Jezebel, sits under a juniper-tree, where, as he slept, the angel touched him ? Elijah ascended soon after in a chariot of fire, letting fall his mantle on Elisha, and Jezebel was dashed to pieces against a stone."

XIX. 18.—*Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all*

the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

Ruskin wrote at the close of "Fors Clavigera" :—

"I thought myself speaking to a crowd which could only be influenced by visible utility; nor was I the least aware how many entirely good and holy persons were living in the faith and love of God as vividly and practically now as ever in the early enthusiasm of Christendom, until, chiefly in consequence of the great illnesses which, for some time after 1878, forbade my accustomed literary labour, I was brought into closer personal relations with the friends in America, Scotland, Ireland, and Italy, to whom, if I am spared to write any record of my life, it will be seen that I owe the best hopes and highest thoughts which have supported and guided the forces of my matured mind. These have shown me, with lovely initiation, in how many sweet places the prayer was made which I had foolishly listened for at the corners of the streets; and on how many hills which I had thought left desolate, the hosts of heaven still moved in chariots of fire."¹

Sir Samuel Morland, who was appointed by Cromwell's Government to distribute the £40,000 collected in England for the relief of the persecuted Piedmontese, wrote as follows of these heroic confessors: "It was as if the All-wise Creator had from the beginning designed that place as a cabinet, wherein to place some inestimable jewel, or (to speak more plainly) there to reserve many thousands of souls, which should not bow the knee before Baal".

"God, who was not in earth when it was shaken,
 Could not be found in fury of the flame,
 Then to His seer, the faithful and forsaken,
 Softly was manifest and spake by name,

Showed him a remnant barred from the betrayal,
 Close in his Carmel, where the caves are dim,
 So many knees that had not bent to Baal,
 So many mouths that had not kissed him."

—F. W. H. MYERS.²

¹ E. T. Cook, "Life of Ruskin," Vol. I, pp. 22, 23.

² "St. Paul."

THE FALSE PROPHETS.

XXII. 22, 23.—In June, 1870, Henry Melvill preached from this passage at St. Paul's Cathedral.

"The whole city of London," writes Bishop Boyd-Carpenter, "was agitated with one question—would there be war between France and Germany? The rival powers of the Chasse-pot and the Needle-gun were discussed in the offices in the City. War was in the air. In France there was much brave talk of going to Berlin. Such was the state of things on that summer afternoon when I heard Melvill preach and all London seemed to listen. He mounted the pulpit. He gave out his text: 'Now therefore the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets; and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee'. There was no need of direct or elaborate allusion to the state of the continent or to the rumours of impending war. It was enough for us to hear of Ramoth in Gilead, and of the brave expedition which sought to seize it. As the sermon went on the obvious application was felt by all. The whole discourse vibrated with the emotions of the moment, and when, a few months later, the fatal *dénouement* came, it might have been said that the sermon was prophetic. 'The Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.' 'I saw all Israel scattered as sheep having no shepherd.' The stirring events of the time conspired with the power and force of the preacher to fix this sermon in memory."¹

THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS.

THE TRANSLATION OF ELIJAH.

II. 11.—Stevens, in his "History of Methodism," gives the following account of the last public appearance of Whitefield, who died in America during his seventh visit:—

"While at supper in Newbury Port, the pavement in front of the house, and even its hall, were crowded with people impatient to hear a few words from his eloquent lips; but he was exhausted, and rising from the table, said to one of the clergymen who were with him—'Brother, you must speak to these dear people, I cannot say a word'. Taking a candle, he hastened

¹ "Some Pages of My Life," pp. 312, 313.

towards his bedroom ; but before reaching it, he was arrested by the suggestion of his own generous heart, that he ought not thus to desert the anxious crowd hungering for the Bread of Life from his hands. He paused on the stairs to address them. He had preached his last sermon ; this was to be his last exhortation. It would seem that some pensive misgiving, some vague presentiment touched his soul with the saddening apprehension that the moments were too precious to be lost in rest ; he lingered on the stairway whilst the crowd gazed up at him with tearful eyes, as Elisha at the ascending prophet. His voice . . . flowed on until the candle, which he held in his hand, burnt away, and went out in its socket. The next morning he was not."

II. 12.—*My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.*

On 19 February, 1546, Melanchthon used this text in announcing to his students the death of Luther, and on the same day he quoted the words in a letter to Justus Jonas, who had been present at the Reformer's death-bed in Eisleben. "Ah, the horseman and the chariot of Israel has passed away, he who guided the Church in this extreme old age of the world."

II. 21.—*He went forth unto the spring of the waters.*

Dean Vaughan used these words in addressing an Oxford audience: "'He went forth to the spring of the waters'. If there is a sense in which Oxford is this to England, certainly there is a sense in which Oxford life is this to you. What is it that gives it its real dignity, its real interest, its real pathos, in a scene like this? Is it not the knowledge that we 'stand here by the well' of a thousand lives—that here, and not elsewhere, is the bounding up of that spring, of which the stream is to be the life of Time, and the ocean the life of Eternity."

IV. 9, 10.—*The prophet's chamber.*

Dame Mary Abney, widow of Sir Thomas Abney, entertained Isaac Watts for many years in the mansion and gardens which once covered the ground of Abney Park Cemetery. "Madam," said Watts to a noble lady who called to see him, "you are come on a very memorable day." "Why so remarkable," she asked. "This day thirty years," replied the invalid, "I came hither to the house of my good friend, Sir Thomas Abney,

intending to spend but one single week under his hospitable roof, and I have extended my visit to the length of exactly thirty years." "Sir," replied Dame Mary, "what you have termed a long thirty years' visit, I consider as the shortest visit my family ever received."¹

Bishop Ken had his "prophet's chamber" at Longleat House in Somersetshire. The most eminent of the Nonjurors was the guest of Lord Weymouth, at the time the possessor of Longleat.

"He occupied a room at the top of the house," and there, surrounded by his large library, he "wrote hymns and sang them to his viol and prayed and died".

IV. 13.—*I dwell among mine own people.*

On accepting Cabinet office in 1868, John Bright was re-elected for Birmingham without opposition. "His speech on 21 December, thanking his constituents for their renewed favour, is memorable," says Mr. G. M. Trevelyan, "for his application to himself of a Bible passage which touched the heart of the nation." "There is a passage in the Old Testament," he said, "which has often struck me as being one of great beauty. Many of you will recollect that the prophet, in journeying to and fro, was very hospitably entertained by what is called in the Bible a Shunammite woman. In return for her hospitality he wished to make her some amends, and he called her to him and asked her what there was he should do for her. 'Shall I speak for thee to the King?' he said, 'or to the Captain of the host?' Now it has always seemed to me that the Shunammite woman returned a natural answer. She replied, in declining the prophet's offer, 'I dwell among mine own people'. When the question was put to me whether I would step into the position in which I now find myself, the answer from my heart was the same—I wish to dwell among mine own people. Happily the time may have come—I trust it has come—when in this country an honest man may enter the service of the Crown, and at the same time not feel it in any degree necessary to dissociate himself from his own people."²

¹ Dr. John Stoughton, "History of Religion in England," Vol. V, p. 456.

"Life of John Bright," p. 398.

iv. 34, 35.—“Faith stretches itself over humanity as the prophet stretched himself above the child—eye to eye, mouth to mouth, heart to heart, and to work a kindred miracle, to bring back life to the dead, by restoring the one to the one—the whole nature of man to the whole nature of God.”—DORA GREENWELL.¹

v. 10.—*The story of Naaman.*

“Philip Henry,” says Dr. Stoughton, “expired in the summer of 1696. A few candidates for the ministry who had in private academies gone through what they termed a University course, were permitted to reside at Broad Oak, and to listen to the instructions of its master. ‘You come to me,’ he would say, ‘as Naaman did to Elisha, expecting that I should do this and the other thing to you, and alas! I can but say as he did! “Go wash in Jordan”. Go study the Scriptures. I profess to teach no other learning but Scripture learning.’”²

v. 12.—*Rivers of Damascus.*

Mr. Robert Hichens says that in Damascus to-day “near the Thomas Gate is the site of the house of Naaman, appropriately close to the present place of the lepers, whom I saw gathered about their well, and who extended their twisted and rotting hands to me for alms”.

xi. 12, 17.—*The crowning of Joash.*

From this passage Robert Douglas preached on New Year’s Day, 1651, in the parish church of Scone at the crowning of Charles II.

xiii. 19.—*Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times.*

Bishop Edward King, when leaving Oxford for the See of Lincoln, gave this among other counsels, to his undergraduate friends, assembled for the last time, in the meeting-room behind his house, called “Bethel” :—

“Aim high in your life (see 2 Kings xiii. 19), ‘Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times’. Often the cause of failure is because you don’t press your victory. Let me leave that with you *as your text*. Bishop Wilberforce impressed that text upon me years ago. Have higher aims.”³

¹ “The Patience of Hope.”

² “History of Religion in England,” Vol. V, p. 307.

³ G. W. E. Russell, “Edward King,” p. 100.

xviii. 3-7.—*The reign of Hezekiah.*

Hezekiah was placed by Dante on the upper arch of the Imperial Eagle's eyelid in his "Paradise". One of the highest places of honour was therefore granted by the poet to this good king.

xix. 35.—Mr. Erskine, in conversation with Dr. Johnson, "seemed to object to the passage in Scripture, where we are told that the angel of the Lord smote in one night forty thousand Assyrians. 'Sir (said Johnson), you should recollect that there was a supernatural interposition; they were destroyed by pestilence. You are not to suppose that the angel of the Lord went about and stabbed each of them with a dagger, or knocked them on the head, man by man.'"

Prof. Robertson Smith, in his lecture on "The Old Testament in Teaching," says: "The power to overthrow His enemies by angelic help, which Jesus claims, but did not use, is the same power which was manifested in the fall of Sennacherib's host".¹

xx. 1.—*Set thine house in order.*

Carlyle wrote to Emerson on the death of Sterling: "His sister-in-law, Mrs. Maurice, had gone down to him—about a week before; other friends were waiting as it were in view of him; but he wished generally to be alone, to continue to the last setting his house and his heart more and more in order for the great journey".²

THE BOOKS OF CHRONICLES.

1 Chron., v. 15.—*Abdiel.*

The name of Abdiel was honoured by Milton as that of the fervent angel who opposed the designs of Satan. The fifth book of "Paradise Lost," in which Raphael relates to Adam the story of the revolt in heaven, closes with these words:—

"So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he;
Among innumerable false, unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,

¹ "Lectures and Essays," p. 291.

² "Correspondence," Vol. II, p. 71.

His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal ;
 Nor number nor example with him wrought
 To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
 Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd
 Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
 Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught ;
 And with retorted scorn, his back he turn'd
 On those proud towers to swift destruction doom'd."

xii. 38-40.—In January, 1644, the Corporation of London invited the Houses of Parliament to a grand banquet, as a proof of union in the common cause, and as a celebration of recent victory over common enemies. The invitation was formally accepted and entered in the journals, and the Commons added to their acceptance of the invitation a request that, on the morning of the festive day, there should be in such place as the City might think fit, by such a minister as the City might choose, a sermon for the commemoration of the recent deliverance. On Thursday, 18 January, Stephen Marshall, the preacher selected by the Corporation, discoursed from 1 Chronicles xii. 38-40. "All these men of war, who could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron to make David king over all Israel, and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king. And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking, for their brethren had prepared for them," etc.

xxii.—Referring to David's preparation for the Temple, Bishop King wrote to a nurse in the diocese of Bloemfontein :—

"He gathered materials, but never saw them put together, or the building rise from the ground. Some day probably God will give you one who will catch the scientific fire from you, and the torch will be handed on ; all things need patience and humility, but these are the flowers and fruit and beauty of scientific life. It is hard and hideous without them, so I am glad to think that you are really receiving just the *double* training that is best for your real perfection."¹

xxix. 10.—*Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, our father, for ever and ever.*

¹ "Spiritual Letters," p. 91.

Henry Martyn wrote in his Cambridge Journal on 9 October, 1803 :—

“Rose at six, which is earlier than of late, and passed the whole morning in great tranquillity. I prayed to be sent out to China, and rejoiced in the prospect of the glorious day when Christ shall be glorified on earth. At chapel the music of the chant and anthem seemed to be in my ears as the sounds of heaven, particularly the anthem, 1 Chronicles xxix. 10.”

xxix. 14.—*Of thine own have we given thee.*

Dean Boyle, in his “Recollections,” describes his arrival at the Charterhouse as a schoolboy. “I looked with awe on the quaint tomb of the founder, the worthy Thomas Sutton, and the motto, *Deo dante dedi*, conspicuous in the building.”

2 Chron., xvi.—James Gilmour of Mongolia wrote in 1870, on one of his missionary tours :—

“Read to-day in 2 Chronicles xvi. God never failed those who trusted in Him and appealed to Him. God was displeased with the King of Judah because, after the deliverance from the Lubims, Ethiopians, etc., he trusted in the arm of flesh to deliver him from the Syrians. Do we not in our day rest too much on the arm of flesh? Cannot the same wonders be done to-day as of old.”¹

xx. 7.—*Abraham thy friend.*

“The name of Abraham acquired a great celebrity, as was promised in the old prediction of Genesis xii. 2. He has maintained through history that title of honour, ‘The friend of God’. Mohammedans vie with Jews and Christians in praising him. They also call him *Chalîlu-allâhi*, i.e. the beloved of God.² For the people of Israel Abraham was the rock out of whom the nation was hewn like some plastic image; to him, as the fundamental origin, it owed its national and religious existence (Is. li. 1 f.). In the diverse ranks of the Old Testament heroes of faith, Abraham, according to the early Christian record, leads the way as standard-bearer, for he ‘in hope believed against hope’ (Rom. iv. 18). With what admiration and gratitude later generations of Christians have looked back to the

¹ “Life of James Gilmour,” p. 59.

² Hebron even to-day is called *el-chalîl*, the town of the beloved.

patriarchs! They could not sufficiently admire the joyful courage with which Abraham obeyed a Divine call to become in a far distant region the originator of a new family of the human race.”—PROF. ED. KÖNIG.¹

HEZEKIAH AND THE AMBASSADORS FROM BABYLON.

xxxii. 31.—*God left him, to try him.*

Henry Martyn wrote in his Journal at Cambridge :—

“Mr. Simeon’s sermon in the evening, on 2 Chronicles xxxii. 31, discovered to me my corruption and vileness, more than any sermon I have ever heard. His divisions were—we little think what is in our hearts till we are tried; we shall soon give some awful proof when we are tried; how one sin may show us all the evil of our hearts. If David, who had so closely walked with God, fell into the most foul and filthy abominations, what must my danger be who walked so unstably! Lord, save Thy servant from presumptuous sins, that they have not dominion over me. Hezekiah’s sin was vanity. Instead of directing the ambassadors who came to inquire about the phenomenon, to the knowledge of Jehovah, who had set the sun in the firmament, he thought only of gratifying his pride, by showing them his treasures, etc. How many times have I fallen into this sin? And had God left me every time to show me what was in my heart? And did I fall into it again and again without learning it. Oh, the riches of His patience and long-suffering!”

¹ “Expositor,” September, 1910.

THE BOOK OF EZRA.

VI. 7.—*Let the work of this house of God alone.*

FROM this text Dr. Charteris preached his sermon as retiring Moderator of the Church of Scotland in 1893. He pleaded for a re-union of the Scottish Churches in the year of the Free Church Jubilee.

VIII. 22.—*I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way.*

Dr. Livingstone, while waiting in 1868 to start for Ujiji, was intently occupied on the great problem of the discovery of the sources of the Nile. Among his notes of the period the following passage occurs:—

“The journey of Ezra was undertaken after a fast at the river Ahava. With nearly 50,000 people he had only about 8000 beasts of burden. He was ashamed to ask a band of soldiers and horsemen for protection in the way. It took about four months to reach Jerusalem; this would give five and a half or six miles a day, as the crow flies, which is equal to twelve or fifteen miles of surface travelled over; this bespeaks a country capable of yielding both provisions and water such as cannot now be found. Ezra would not have been ashamed to ask for camels to carry provisions and water had the country been as dry as it is now. The prophets, in telling all the woes and miseries of the captivities, never allude to suffering or perishing by thirst in the way, or being left to rot in the route as African slaves now are in a well-watered country. Had the route to Assyria been then as it is now, they could scarcely have avoided referring to the thirst of the way; but everything else is mentioned except that.”¹

¹ “Last Journals,” Vol. I, p. 343.

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.

FRANCES, BARONESS BUNSEN wrote to her mother from Frascati in 1825:—

“I have enjoyed reading in the Bible more than I have time to do at home—I mean, time uninterrupted, and to read with interruptions is of little avail. I have been greatly struck with many historical parts of the Old Testament, which in connexion I have not read for years; and must ask my mother whether she does not think the narrative of Nehemiah most particularly touching.”¹

“THE BROAD WALL.”

III. 8.—Dr. Kawerau wrote of Spurgeon that a text often served him merely as the nail on which he hung one edifying thought after another. “For instance he reads Nehemiah III. 8 as the text of his sermon, taking only the words: ‘The broad wall’. The town of Jerusalem was surrounded with a broad wall. Then it strikes him what a broad wall means for a town, as a boundary, as a defence, as a place where the people meet for recreation and social intercourse. And he applies all these ideas, using them in a spiritual sense, to the City of God.”²

IX. 26.— . . . *And cast thy law behind their backs.*

When Lord Willbewill took service under Diabolus, Bunyan tells us, his clerk, Mr. Mind, had some old, rent, and torn parchments of the law of good Shaddai in his house, but when Willbewill saw them, he cast them behind his back.³

¹ “Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen,” Vol. I, p. 256.

² “C. H. Spurgeon, ein Prediger von Gottes Gnaden,” pp. 61, 62.

³ “The Holy War.”

THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

DR. THOMAS McCRIE, the biographer of Knox, who delivered in 1830 a course of lectures on the Book of Esther, describes this portion of Scripture as "a golden leaf in the book of providence, teaching us that 'the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men,' and that His government extends over the whole earth. . . . The veil is withdrawn, and we see the hand of God directing, controlling, overruling, and managing the events of time and the hearts of men."

Dr. McCrie, and his successor in the same field of exposition, Dr. A. D. Davidson of Aberdeen, made considerable use of Matthew Henry's commentary. Of this Book Matthew Henry wrote: "Though the name of God be not in it, His finger is".

Maimonides asserted that when all the rest of the Old Testament canon would pass away in the days of the coming of the Messiah, Esther and the Pentateuch would still remain.¹

In Racine's "Esther" King Ahasuerus says:—

"Tout respire en Esther l'innocence et la paix ;

Du chagrin le plus noir elle écarte les ombres

Et fait des jours sereins de mes jours les plus sombres."

Racine's "Mystery of Esther" was played before the Court of Louis XIV by the noble maidens of Saint Cyr. "Esther," says Madame Duclaux, "was—a sensitive tentacle extended—a feeler timidly stretched—to explore the state of opinion as to a public declaration of the King's secret marriage [to Madame de Maintenon] which seemed, at one time, so probable that Louvois threw himself at Louis' feet and swore that if such a thing happened, he, for one, would not survive so great a degradation of the throne."²

¹ A. H. Sayce, "An Introduction to the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther," p. 92.

² "The French Ideal," p. 158.

Hans Sachs wrote two dramas on the subject of Esther. The earlier of these, written in 1536, is believed by Mr. Israel Abrahams to be the oldest complete dramatization of the Bible story, for the English "Interlude" though perhaps a few years earlier, is not a complete play. There are many deviations from the original. "It is destitute of the lyric beauty of Racine, but it is truer to human nature. There is no hidden motive in it. It is an attack neither on the Jews nor on the Pope."¹

v. 2.—*The king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near and touched the top of the sceptre.*

Bunyan, in "The Holy War," says that after the pardon of Mansoul, "the whole town came out as one man to the Prince in the camp to thank him, and praise him for his abundant favour, and to beg that it would please his grace to come unto Mansoul with his men, and there to take up their quarters for ever: and this they did in most humble manner, bowing themselves seven times to the ground before him. Then said he, 'All peace be to you'. So the town came nigh, and touched with the hand the top of his golden sceptre; and they said, 'Oh that the Prince Immanuel, with his captains and men of war, would dwell in Mansoul for ever; and that his battering-rams and slings might be lodged in her for the use and service of the Prince, and for the help and strength of Mansoul. For,' said they, 'we have room for thee, we have room for thy men, we have also room for thy weapons of war, and a place to make a magazine for thy carriages. Do it, Immanuel, and thou shalt be King and Captain in Mansoul for ever. Yea, govern thou also according to all the desire of thy soul, and make thou governors and princes under thee of thy captains and men of war, and we will become thy servants, and thy laws shall be our direction.' "

x. 3.—The words of this verse are inscribed in Welsh and English on the monument erected to Henry Richard, M.P., in Abney Park Cemetery, London. He also, like Mordecai, was in his day "accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people and speaking peace to all his seed".

¹ "Festival Studies."

THE BOOK OF JOB.

“Job's pathetic plaint and wailing cry.”—ROBERT BURNS.

“I had heard Job plead with God as a man might plead with his neighbour, I had listened to the terrific challenges in which the creature seemed as it were to arraign its Creator at the bar of eternal justice, truth, and love, and there to demand a hearing. And I had found it was Job of whom God said, ‘*He hath spoken concerning Me the thing that is right*’. I had seen Job blessed, justified, *accepted* by his Maker, while his friends, the special pleaders for omnipotence, were forgiven for his sake, and indebted to his priestly intercession for their pardon.”—DORA GREENWELL.”¹

PASCAL says that Job and Solomon knew most and spoke best about the misery of man. One was the happiest, the other the most unhappy of mortals. One knew by experience the vanity of pleasures, as the other knew in the same way the reality of evils.

Luther found great difficulty in translating this book. “Job repels our efforts at translation,” he wrote, “as he refused the consolations of his friends.” And elsewhere, “Philip, Aurogallus, and I, sometimes work so slowly at Job that in four days we scarcely complete three lines”.²

Cardinal Newman wrote in his journal in 1867: “What I have written in the foregoing pages has been written as a sort of relief to my mind; if that were the only reason for writing, I should not write now, for I have no trouble within me to be relieved of. I will put myself under the image of the Patriarch Job, without intending to liken myself to him. He first strenuously resisted the charges of his friends, then he made a long protest of his innocence, and then we read, ‘The words of Job are ended’. Mine are ended too—I have said to Cardinal Barnabo: ‘Viderit Deus,’ I have lodged my cause with Him—and, while I hope ever by His grace to be obedient, I have now

¹ “Colloquia Crucis.”

² A. Hausrath, “Luthers Leben,” Vol. II, pp. 132, 133.

as little desire as I have hope to gain the praise of such as him in anything I shall do henceforth.”¹

Prof. Breasted describes an ancient Egyptian document to which he supplies the title, “The Dialogue of a Misanthrope with his Own Soul,” though no ancient title has survived. “It is our earliest Book of Job,” he says, “written some fifteen hundred years before a similar experience brought forth a similar book among the Hebrews. . . . It concludes with a solution likewise found among those discerned by Job,—an appeal to justification hereafter, although Job does not necessarily make this a reason for seeking death, thus making death the vestibule to the judgment-hall, and therefore to be sought as soon as possible.”²

I. 7.—*And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.*

Lucifer, in Mrs. Browning’s “Drama of Exile,” says, in answer to Gabriel’s entreaty that he should leave the earth without inflicting further injury on the human race:—

“Angels are in the world—wherefore not I?

Exiles are in the world—wherefore not I?

The cursed are in the world—wherefore not I?”

I. 21.—“Naked we came here—naked of natural things—and naked we shall return; but while clothed with the Divine mercy, we are richly clothed in spiritual, and suffer all the rest gladly.”³

“It is a horrible thing,” says Pascal, “to feel that all we possess is slipping away.”

This text is associated with the great Antarctic explorer, Captain Scott, who perished in March, 1912, with his four brave companions, after reaching the South Pole. The words “The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away” were inscribed on the cross erected by the search-party to the memory of the heroes.

Prince Juan, the only son of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, died on 4 October, 1497. His monument in the church of San

¹ Wilfrid Ward, “Life of Cardinal Newman,” Vol. II, p. 200.

² “Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt,” pp. 188, 197.

³ William Blake.

Tomas at Avila, is described by Mr. Hare as "the most touching of sepulchral effigies". When the royal mother heard of his death she said, "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be His name". Prince Juan passed away in his twentieth year. "A brilliant scholar, an accomplished linguist and musician, beautiful in person, and endowed with the most amiable, generous, and winning of characters, he grew up the delight of his parents and the idol of their people."¹

II. 10.—*Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?*

On the eve of his worst operation, William Robertson Smith wrote to his mother: "Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?"²

III. 3.—*Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived.*

Scott says in his "Life of Swift": "He early adopted the custom of observing his birthday, as a term not of joy but of sorrow, and of reading, when it annually recurred, the striking passage of Scripture in which Job laments and execrates the day upon which it was said in his father's house *that a man-child was born*".

IV. 13-17.—"There is a human fear, and a Divine fear. The one is disturbed, restless, and bent upon escape; the other is bowed down, effortless, passive. When the spirit appeared before Eliphaz in the visions of the night, and the hair of his flesh stood up, was it in the thoughts of the Temanite to ring the bell of his chamber, or to call up the servants?"³

VII. 15.—*My soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life.*

Bunyan puts this text into the mouth of Christian, in the darkest hour of his captivity in Giant Despair's dungeon.

VII. 16.—*I would not live alway.*

Dr. William Mair, at the close of his autobiography, written at the age of eighty, says:—

¹ "Wanderings in Spain," p. 243.

² "British Weekly," 23 May, 1912.

³ Charles Lamb's "Essay on the Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art".

"Fourscore has not tired me of life. Indeed mere life, mere living, neither produces tiredness nor becomes tired. And, except in rare cases, we always aim at continuing it. Does not this help to show that life was intended to go on, that we were meant for immortality? Tiredness of life comes from burdens of the body and of the spirit. I have said I am not tired; yet in this world, as was said by Job, 'I would not live away'. Nor could I be persuaded to face a lifetime again. Once is enough. 'He hath done all things well.' 'To God only wise be glory through Jesus Christ for ever.'"¹

Dr. John Brown, in the Preface to the second series of "Horæ Subsecivæ" quotes "an old doggrel verse":—

"I wud nut lyv all ways,
I wud nut ef I cud;
But, I kneed nut fret about it,
'Caws I cudn't ef I wud."

xi. 7-9.—*Canst thou by searching find out God?*

The National Gallery contains "The Vision of St. Augustine" by Garofalo. Sir E. T. Cook, in his "Handbook," tells the story as follows: "While busied, he [St. Augustine] tells us, in writing his discourse on the Trinity, he one day beheld a child, who, having dug a hole in the sand, was bringing water, as children at the seaside do, to empty the sea into his hole. Augustine told him it was impossible. 'Not more impossible,' replied the child, 'than for thee, O Augustine! to explain the mystery on which thou art now meditating.' ('Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea,' Job xi. 7-9). The painter shows the visionary nature of the scene by placing beside St. Augustine the figure of St. Catharine, the patron saint of theologians and scholars, and in the background, on a little jutting cape, St. Stephen, whose life and actions are set forth in St. Augustine's writings. The saint himself receives the child's lesson with the contemptuous impatience of a scholar's ambition; but all the time the heavens whose mysteries he would explore

¹ "My Life," p. 349.

are opened behind him, and the angel choirs are singing that he who would enter in must first become as a little child, 'for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven'."

XIII. 15.—*Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.*

Carlyle wrote to his dying friend, John Sterling, on 27 August, 1844:—

"We are journeying towards the Grand Silence; what lies beyond it earthly man has never known, nor will know; but all brave men have known that it was godlike, that it was right Good—that the name of it was God. *Wir heissen euch hoffen* [we bid you hope]. What is right and best for us will full surely be. Tho' He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. 'Eterno Amore;' that is the ultimate significance of this wild clashing whirlwind which is named Life, where the sons of Adam flicker painfully for an hour."¹

After the death of Emerson's little son, Carlyle wrote to the bereaved father:—

"What can we say in these cases? There is nothing to be said—nothing but what the wild son of Ishmael, and every thinking heart, from of old have learned to say: God is great! He is terrible and stern; but we know also He is good. 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.' Your bright little boy, chief of your possessions here below, is rapt away from you; but of very truth *he* is with God, even as we that yet live are—and surely in the way that was *best* for him, and for you, and for all of us."²

In the Midrash a Rabbi says: "Though God torment me and embitter my life, still shall He dwell in my heart."³

The words of the text are inscribed on a memorial erected in honour of Mrs. Gaskell. They were often quoted by her, and were among the last words she uttered.

XIV. 12.—*Man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.*

"In the religion of ancient Egypt we hear again and again the indomitable assurance that the dead live. 'Thou hast departed

¹ "New Letters" (1904), Vol. I, pp. 318, 319.

² "Correspondence," Vol. I, p. 361.

³ Israel Abrahams, "Aspects of Judaism," p. 85.

that thou mightest live.' But even in the early fragments there are passages which recall this chapter of Job :—

“ ‘None cometh from thence
That he may tell (us) how they fare ;
That he may tell (us) of their fortunes,
That he may content our heart,
Until we (too) depart
To the place whither they have gone.’ ”

—PROF. BREASTED.¹

XIV. 14.—*If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

J. M. Neale, in a sermon on this text, said : “ I remember when I was at the University, I had been reading hard all one summer’s day out of the writings of a very learned man, by name Plato : not only a learned man, but for a heathen a good man ; one who felt about in that black darkness after God, and seemed to get nearer to Him than any other Pagan before or since. Well, I had been reading a book of his in which he discusses the question whether the soul is immortal or not, and I came to a place in which he says that whether it be so or not, death is of all terrible things the most terrible. There I laid down my book, and went out for a walk to one of the villages near Cambridge. And as I was walking through the churchyard, I heard the voices of the village school singing those lines :—

‘Teach me to live that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed,’

and remembering what I had just been reading, I called to mind that saying of our dear Lord, ‘I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes’.”²

The words “*Exspecto donec veniat immutatio mea*” were chosen by the great Cardinal Charles of Lorraine for his tombstone in Rheims Cathedral. The stately tomb has long been removed, but these words may still be read on a slab behind the “Cardinal’s Altar”.

In a letter to his sisters written in September, 1833, nine

¹ “Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt.”

² “Sermons in Sackville College Chapel,” Vol. II, pp. 169, 170.

months before his death, Dr. Carey wrote: "My being able to write to you now is quite unexpected by me, and I believe, by every one else; but it appears to be the will of God that I should continue a little time longer. How long that may be I leave entirely with Him, and can only say, 'All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come'."¹

XIV. 15.—*Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee.*

The last sentence distinctly uttered by the Emperor Charles V, as he lay dying in the monastery of Yuste, was "Ya, voy, Señor"—"Now, Lord, I go". He spoke quickly, as if in answer to a sudden summons. A few moments of struggle followed, then, in a voice clear and loud enough to be heard in the neighbouring rooms, he cried three times, "*Ay, Jesus,*" and passed away.²

XVI. 2.—*Miserable comforters are ye all.*

A typical Job's comforter is described by Bunyan in "Grace Abounding". He broke his mind to an "ancient Christian". "I told him also that I was afraid that I had sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost; and he told me *he thought so too*. Here, therefore, I had but cold comfort; but talking a little more with him, I found him, though a good man, a stranger to much combat with the Devil."

XVI. 22.—*When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.*

When the Emperor Charles V was travelling towards his last resting-place, the monastery of Yuste in Estremadura, he was charmed with the aspect of his promised land. "Is this indeed the Vera?" he said, gazing intently at the landscape at his feet. He then turned his eyes towards the north, into the forest-mantled gorge, between the beetling rocks of the Puerto-nuevo. "Now," he said, looking back, as it were, through the gates of the world he was leaving, "'tis the last pass I shall ever go through: *Ya no pasaré otro puerto*".³

This text, in the Vulgate rendering, was prefixed by the Duc de Broglie to the Memoirs of his long life:—

¹ Dr. George Smith's "Life of Carey," p. 428.

² W. Stirling-Maxwell, "The Cloister Life of the Emperor Charles V".

³ *Ibid.*

“ Ecce enim breves anni transeunt, et semitam per quam non revertar ambulo.”

There is a tradition that Rob Roy was visited on his death-bed by one of his hereditary foemen of the MacLarens. The stranger entered and paid his compliments, inquiring after the health of his formidable neighbour. Rob Roy maintained a cold, haughty civility during their short conference, and as soon as he had left the house, “ Now,” he said, “ all is over, let the piper play *Ha til mi tulidh* (we return no more),” and he is said to have expired before the dirge was finished.¹

xviii. 14.—*The king of terrors.*

We are told that when Anne Hyde, wife of the Duke of York [King James II] was dying, her last words to her husband were, “ Duke, Duke, death is terrible, death is very terrible”.²

xxi. 33.—*The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him.*

Mark Rutherford quotes this verse in a mournful passage of “ More Pages from a Journal ”. “ There is no suffering in any stage tragedy,” he says, “ equal to that of the unmarried woman who is well brought up, with natural gifts above those of women generally, living on a small income, past middle-age and unable to work. It is not the suffering which is acute torture ending in death, but worse, the black, moveless gloom of the second floor in Hackney or Islington. Almost certainly she has but few friends, and those she has will be occupied with household or wage-earning duties. . . . There is no religion for her and such as she, excepting that Catholic Faith of one article only—*The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him.*”

xxv. 2.—*He maketh peace in His high places.*

Lafcadio Hearn complained that the Japanese “ have no souls ”. “ Imagine people having no sentiment of light—of blue—of infinity! And they cannot feel possibly the beauty of their own day as you or I do. Think of the comparison of Fuji to a half-open inverted fan hanging in the sky. Of course it is pretty; it is even startlingly real; but what sentiment is there in it? What feeling do mountains give these people? Surely nothing like the thought of Job—‘ He maketh peace in

¹ Sir Walter Scott’s Introduction to “ Rob Roy ”.

² Dr. Denton to Sir R. Verney; Verney MSS. (quoted by Mary F. Sanders in her “ Life of Mary II ” (1913), p. 15.

His high places'. What feeling does light give them?—the light which makes us wish to pray—to thank somebody for it? Nothing like the utterance of John—"verily this is the message we give unto you—that *God is Light*".

XXVI. 11.—*The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at His reproof.*

Ruskin wrote amid the troubles of 1848 :—

"I begin to feel that all the work I have been doing, and all the loves I have been cherishing, are ineffective and frivolous—that these are not times for watching clouds or dreaming over quiet waters, that more serious work is to be done, and that the time for endurance has come rather than for meditation, and for hope rather than for happiness. Happy those whose hope, without this severe and tearful rending away of all the props and stability of earthly enjoyments, has been fixed 'where the wicked cease from troubling'. Mine was not; it was based on 'those pillars of the earth' which are 'astonished at His reproof . . .'"¹

XXVIII.—Edward Irving wrote of this chapter :—

"Dearest Isabella, what a passage of Holy Writ that is! What a climax of sublimity, ranging from the profound mysteries of the bowels of the earth, and the knowledge of man and all his most valuable possessions, and through the earth and the hoary deep, and through death and the grave, till at length he finds it in the simplicity of spiritual truth: 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom [sic], and to depart from evil, that is understanding'."²

XXIX. 3.—When the sun rose upon the Valley of the Shadow of Death, Christian said, "His candle shineth on my head, and by His light I go through darkness".

XXIX. 15.—*I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame, etc.*

Prof. Breasted, in his learned book, "Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt," describes an address to the living on the front of the tomb of the greatest of early African explorers, Harkhuf of Elephantine, who penetrated to

¹ E. T. Cook, "The Life of Ruskin," Vol. I, p. 221.

² Mrs. Oliphant's "Life of Irving," Vol. I, p. 353.

the Sudan in the twenty-sixth century B.C. He says: "I was . . . one beloved of his father, praised of his mother, whom all his brothers loved. I gave bread to the hungry, clothing to the naked. I ferried him who had no boat. . . . Never did I say aught evil to a powerful one about anybody. I desired that it might be well with me in the great God's presence."

XXXI. 23.—*For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of His highness I could not endure.*

The Vulgate renders this verse: "Semper enim quasi tumentes super me fluctus timui Deum, et pondus ejus ferre non potui". ("For always have I feared God as a flood swelling over me, and His weight I have not been able to bear.") In this form the text is closely associated with the life of M. de Saci of Port-Royal. Fontaine tells us that he constantly repeated it. "I think," adds Fontaine, "that almost every one who knew him must have heard it from his lips. He did not only repeat it, he felt it also, and felt it like holy Job, not as a transient emotion, but as a mood of the heart which never changed." Sainte-Beuve has the following note: "Can we picture M. de Saci who walked his whole life long, with clasped hands on a straight and narrow path, under that Ocean of God?"¹

XXXII. 8.—*There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the almighty giveth them understanding.*

In his essay on Dr. Chalmers in "*Horæ Subsecivæ*," Dr. John Brown says:—

"When we meet a *solar* man, of ample nature—soul, body, and spirit; when we find him from his earliest years moving among his fellows like a king, moving them whether they will or not—this feeling of mystery is deepened; and though we would not, like some men (who should know better) worship the creature and convert a hero into a god, we do feel more than in other cases the truth, that it is the inspiration of the Almighty which has given to that man understanding, and that all power, all energy, all light, come to him, from the First and the Last—the Living One."

XXXVII. 22.—*Fair weather cometh out of the north.*

¹ "Port-Royal," Vol. II, p. 329.

John Semple, as Patrick Walker tells us, once designed to administrate the Sacrament in the open air. On the fast-day morning rain fell in torrents, and some of the elders came to tell their minister "that the people would not be able to sit without. He said, 'I'll go out with you'. They went to the kirk; for some time he walked up and down the kirk very melancholly, at last opened a little door that looked to the north, where he stood for some time; at last, with much cheerfulness, said, "Out of the north cometh fair weather"; we'll be no more troubled with rain till this solemn occasion be over. But tell all your friends to be in readiness and go quickly off, and take good heed to themselves in waters, for the rain will be excessive then.' Which accordingly came to pass in every jot." ¹

XXXVIII. 1.—*Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind.*

St. John of the Cross remarks on this verse that when God has a great revelation to make, He appears in darkness. He spoke to Job "through the dark air" ("Respondens autem Job de turbine, dixit"). In the same connexion he refers to the words of Solomon (1 Kings VIII. 12), "The Lord said that He would dwell in the thick darkness," and Exodus XIX. 9, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud".

"These darknesses all signify the obscurity of Faith with which the Divinity is covered, as He communes with the soul, and this darkness shall be done away, as St. Paul says, 'when that which is perfect shall come'." ²

XXXVIII. 7.—*When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.*

Mr. Samuel Palmer wrote of William Blake: "In Westminster Abbey were his earliest and most sacred recollections. I asked him how he would like to paint on glass, for the great west-window, his 'Sons of God Shouting for Joy' from his designs in the 'Job'. He said, after a pause, 'I could do it,' kindling at the thought." ³

¹ "Six Saints of the Covenant," Vol. I, p. 196.

² "Obras," Vol. I, p. 77.

³ Gilchrist's "Life of Blake," p. 321.

xxxix. 26.—*Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south?*

In the old Egyptian mythology the sun appeared as a falcon. "The lofty flight of this bird," says Prof. Breasted, "which seemed a very comrade of the sun, had led the early fancy of the Nile-peasant to believe that the sun must be such a falcon, taking his daily flight across the heavens, and the sun-disk with the outspread wings of the falcon became the commonest symbol of Egyptian religion."¹

Auceps says in "The Complete Angler":—

"In the air my troops of hawks soar up on high, and when they are lost in the sight of men, then they attend upon and converse with the gods; therefore I think my eagle is so justly styled 'Jove's servant in ordinary': and that very falcon, that I am now going to see, deserves no meaner a title, for she usually in her flight endangers herself, like the son of Dædalus, to have her wings scorched by the sun's heat, she flies so near it; but her mettle makes her careless of danger; for then she heeds nothing, but makes her nimble pinions cut the fluid air, and so makes her highway over the steepest mountains and deepest rivers, and in her glorious career looks with contempt upon those high steeples and magnificent palaces which we adore and wonder at; from which height I can make her to descend by a word from my mouth (which she both knows and obeys), to accept of meat from my hand, to own me for her master, to go home with me, and be willing the next day to afford me the like recreation."

xli. 2.—*Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook?* [R.V. *with a fish-hook?*] Marginal reading A.V., *a whale, or a whirlpool*; marginal reading R.V., *the crocodile*.

Milton writes of:—

". . . That sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all His works
Created hugest that swim the ocean stream:
Him, haply, slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff,

¹ "Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt," p. 11.

Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lea, while night
Invests the sea, and wishéd morn delays."

To the men of the seventeenth century Job's leviathan was the whale, not the crocodile.

XLII. 10.—*The Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.*

"I never saw those heights and depths in grace, and love, and mercy, as I saw after this temptation," writes Bunyan; "great sins to draw out great grace; and where guilt is most terrible and fierce, there the mercy of God in Christ, when showed to the soul, appears most high and mighty. When Job had passed through his captivity, he had twice as much as he had before."

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

"It is a great gift to the Church, that Psalter of Israel. I never tire of the magnificent ancient poetry of the Jews."—DR. JOHN DUNCAN.

SOME PERSONAL TESTIMONIES.

✓ "WHAT poets those old Hebrews were!" John Bright used often to exclaim. "The Jew has conquered the world!" was Thomas Binney's prelude to a grand eulogy of the Psalms.¹ This book has been well described as the heart of the Bible. "In the Psalms," said Luther, "we look into the heart of all the saints, and we seem to gaze into fair pleasure-gardens—into heaven itself, indeed—where bloom the sweet, refreshing, gladdening flowers of holy and happy thoughts about God and all His benefits. On the other hand, where will you find deeper, sadder, more piteous words of mourning than in the Psalms of complaint? In these again, we look into the heart of all the saints, and we seem to be looking into death, yea into hell itself. How gloomy, how dark it is there, because of the many sad visions of the wrath of God."

Calvin wrote in the Preface to his "Commentary on the Psalms": "What various and resplendent riches are contained in this treasury, it were difficult to find words to describe. . . . I am in the habit of calling this book, not inappropriately, 'The Anatomy of all Parts of the Soul,' for not an affection will any one find in himself, an image of which is not reflected in this mirror. Nay, all the griefs, sorrows, fears, misgivings, hopes, cares, anxieties, in short, all the disquieting emotions with which the minds of men are wont to be agitated, the Holy Spirit hath here pictured to the life."²

¹ T. L. Cuyler, "Recollections of a Long Life," p. 171.

² "A Commentary on the Psalms of David."

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

The Psalms have comforted lonely wanderers on the darkest continents of the soul. "When I feel I cannot make headway in devotion," wrote James Gilmour of Mongolia, "I open at the Psalms and push in my canoe, and let myself be carried along in the stream of devotion which flows through the whole Book. The current always sets towards God, and in most places is strong and deep." Morning and evening, summer and winter, boats are putting off from Psalm-wharf. The "canoe" in early Christian ages was sometimes a fighting barque, for, as John Hill Burton reminds us, one of St. Columba's battles raged about a transcript of the Psalms. "The river of God is full of water," and there are landing-places all along the shore. The child-saint Elizabeth of Hungary saw the river flowing through the chapel of the Wartburg, for her ladies often found her lying in front of the altar, with her small hands folded and the Psalms spread open before her, as if she were praying from the illuminated book.¹ Amid the droughts of Estremadura, the Emperor Charles V sang psalms on sleepless nights with the gentlemen of his chamber.² This river flowed with the Elbe current past the walls of Wittenberg in the same century. George Ellinger tells how Melanchthon's students made notes with reverent care from the Lectures on the Psalms which belong to the Preceptor's closing years. These were not intended for publication, but they afford us a truer insight into his mode of teaching than the commentaries he prepared for a wider circulation. His one purpose was to make the Psalms religiously fruitful.

According as they refer more or less to the individual or to the community, he regards the speaker as Christ or the Church. And in both cases his advice is that the student of the Psalter should apply the words to his own necessities. "Let us unite our sighs and prayers with the voice of the great High Priest, and trust that the answer will come, since through Him they are presented to the Eternal Father."

The music of the Psalm-River mingles with the flowing of the Thames. S. T. Coleridge testified that after having studied every page of the Bible with the deepest attention, he had

¹ William Canton, "The Story of St. Elizabeth of Hungary," p. 34.

² Sir W. Stirling-Maxwell, "The Cloister Life of the Emperor Charles V".

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

found no other part of Scripture come home so closely to his inmost yearnings and necessities. During his later years he read some verses of the Psalms every evening. He would have approved the practice of Archbishop Temple's mother, who read the Psalms and Lessons for every day with her children.

Take also these words of a modern Thames-side dweller, Theodore Watts-Dunton : " The very quintessence of the Bible is the Book of Psalms ".¹

Murmurings from the Psalms are heard beside the brooks and streams of Scotland.

Sir Walter Scott loved the sound of psalmody. He fixed his bowling-green at Abbotsford near *Peterhouse*, the abode of his coachman, Peter Mathieson. " I must not forget," says Lockhart, " the reason he gave me some time afterwards for having fixed on that spot for his bowling-green. ' In truth,' he then said, ' I wished to have a smooth walk and a canny seat for myself within earshot of Peter's evening psalm.' The coachman was a devout Presbyterian, and many a time in after years have I accompanied Scott on his evening stroll, when the principal object was to enjoy, from the bowling-green, the unfailing melody of this good man's family worship—and heard him repeat, as Peter's manly voice led the humble choir within, that beautiful stanza of Burns's " Saturday Night " :—

" They chaunt their artless notes in simple guise ;

They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim '." ²

Thomas Erskine of Linlathen said :—

" How natural and free are the expressions of the Psalms ! They begin with the great universal benediction on the upright honest man, ' the noblest work of God,' and they end with the generous universal invocation of all nature, ' Let everything that hath breath '—every creature, without limit or exception—' praise the Lord '".³

When Mr. Erskine was dying the Psalms were much upon his lips. " For more than fifty years they had been his daily study and delight, the cadence of many of their well-known

¹ James Douglas, " Theodore Watts-Dunton," p. 230.

² " Life of Scott," ch. XLII.

³ Reminiscences by Dean Stanley, " Letters of Thomas Erskine," p. 455.

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verses the softest, sublimest music to his ear. And now they refreshed his soul in death. The 20th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 31st, 32nd, 62nd, 73rd, 86th, 103rd, 116th, 130th, and 139th were special favourites ; recited by himself with deep solemnity of tone, or when voice failed, listened to and re-echoed as repeated to him by others.”¹

Prof. McEwen, in his “Life of John Cairns,” tells us that the father of his hero had “a thirst for books not easy for him to gratify. . . . Bibles were too high priced for a parent to provide a copy for each child who left home, and John’s equipment in this department was a copy of John Brown of Haddington’s Psalm-Book, with preface and notes to each Psalm, which was long kept as a precious relic—weather-worn and thumb-worn, but without a loose leaf. This was the strong meat with which the thoughtful lad fed his soul on the wild and stormy coast.”

Prof. Robertson Smith said to a friend that he could not have sustained himself during his trial for heresy but for the help he drew from the Psalms.

The voice of the stranger and the sojourner is heard throughout the Psalms, and in modern life this is the wayfarer’s book. Prof. Elmslie, in his “Ramblings in Switzerland,” told the following incident:—

“One night we slept on the Rigi. Next morning we were up before dawn and set out shivering for the mountain ridge. Amid a motley throng, wrapped in rugs, waterproofs, and blankets, we watched the sunbeams steal across the horizon and touch into sudden light, one by one, the long procession of snowy peaks ranged over against us in all their ‘white array’. There stood hard by a man in shabby garments, wayworn and stained, with a knapsack on his back, and in his hand an open volume, old and grimy. His eyes had in them that curious glow so often seen in the eyes of enthusiasts, and in the pictures of mediaeval saints—whom he also resembled in his manifest contempt of cleanliness. One wondered what a being so unromantic and common-looking could want or find in such a situation. As we turned to go, the strange figure accosted us, and in a low and reverent voice said, ‘God has shown Himself very friendly to

¹ “Letters of Thomas Erskine,” p. 504.

us, has He not, in providing for us a scene so fair?' Poetry and piety are not always put up in a fashionable binding. The frayed and much-thumbed volume in his hand was a copy of the Psalms of David."

We seem to hear the voice of the Hebrew Professor, so soon to be taken from the Church in the prime of his years, joining with that of the nameless wanderer on the Rigi: "I am a stranger upon earth: O hide not Thy commandments from me".

Turning to the separate Psalms, we may humbly echo the words of John Donne in his poem on the "Sidneian" translation of the Psalter, made by Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke, his sister:—

" May
These their sweet learned labours all the way
Be as our tuning, that when hence we part,
We may fall in with them, and sing our part!"

I. 3.—*And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters.*

Guy Carleton, Bishop of Chichester from 1678 to 1685, wrote to Sancroft the Primate, complaining of the honour done to the Duke of Monmouth on his visit to the city. "The great men of our Cathedral welcomed him with bells and bonfires, made by wood had from their houses to flare before his lodgings. Monmouth was ushered into the dean's seat with a voluntary upon the organ. Before the sermon a part of the first Psalm was ordered to be sung, 'He shall be like the tree that grows fast by river syde'. By a mournful coincidence, the anthem at evening prayer was, 'The Slaughter of King Saul and his People upon the mountains of Gilboa'."

The indignant Bishop complained that there was "not a word, I warrant you, of the 'King's enemies to perish,' and that upon his head the crown might long flourish".

Chichester people may perhaps have recalled that anthem after the defeat of Sedgemoor.¹

II.—Bishop King of Lincoln said: "These two passages have been a great help to me: Psalm II, 'The heathen raging, and

¹ Quoted by the Rev. A. Saunders Dyer in "Psalm Mosaics," pp. 31, 32.

God laughs them to scorn'; St. John xix. 11, 'Thou couldst have no power against me, except it were given thee from above'. The whole grip of the Roman power was completely in the hands of the Almighty. *The Will* will be stronger than the cord which holds body and soul together. God can carry out the work, even if we die in our attempt to fulfil it." ¹

II. 11.—*Rejoice with trembling.*

"Luther said that many texts of Holy Scripture were made clearer to him as he watched his children. In the second Psalm these words occur, 'Rejoice with trembling'. Does not the one command exclude the other? How can anyone rejoice and also fear? Luther understood what the Psalmist meant as he watched his little Hans playing in his study. Sometimes the boy forgot where he was, and began to sing out loud with his clear childish voice, till his father had to check him. Then he did not fall silent; he went on happily with his song, but he sang more softly, and with his large eyes he watched his dear father, so as to be sure he did not disturb him. It is thus, said Luther, that we ought to have God before our eyes." ²

III. 5 and iv. 9 (Prayer-Book Version).—*I laid me down and slept, and rose up again: for the Lord sustained me.*

Dean Alford wrote in his Journal for New Year's Day, 1871: "I preached on Psalm III. 5 and iv. 9. Evening and morning thanksgivings. 'I laid me down and slept, and rose up again: for the Lord sustained me.' 'I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest: for it is Thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety.' God only knows whether I shall survive this year. I sometimes think my health is giving way, but His will be done." Twelve days later the Dean passed away at the age of sixty-one.

IV. 4.—*Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still.*

Thomas à Kempis, in his "Imitation of Christ," says: "If thou desirest true contrition of heart, enter into thy secret chamber and shut out the tumults of the world, as it is written, 'Commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still'. In thy chamber thou shalt find what abroad thou shalt

¹ G. W. E. Russell, "Edward King," p. 101.

² E. Kroker, "Katharina von Bora" (1906), p. 143.

too often lose. The more thou visitest thy chamber, the more thou wilt enjoy it ; the less thou comest thereunto, the more thou wilt loathe it. If in the beginning of thy conversion thou are content to remain in it and keep to it well, it will afterwards be to thee a dear friend and a most pleasant comfort."

Carlyle wrote to John Sterling in 1836: "On the whole *Silence* seems to me the Highest Divinity on this Earth at present. Blessed is Silence ; the giver of all Truth, of all good that has any substance or continuance in it ! If a man is to work, indeed, as a Reviewer, or Pamphlet-book writer, or as a Parliamenter, or Town-crier, Silence will not do for him at all. But if a man is not to work in any such way as these, but in a quite other and higher way, then let him sit seven years silent, or half a century silent (nay for that matter, all his days *silent*)—the net result cannot be got out of him otherwise. . . . The grand Application and Use or Improvement of the whole is : Sit quiet, or as near as may be *stagnant* ; in the stillness all blessed things will grow in you."¹

iv. 8.—*I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep ; for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.*

In the "Life of Archbishop Tait," the following words are quoted from Lady Wake's "Reminiscences" :—

"We could not but receive abiding impressions from our gentle mother. Each night, when she knew her little ones were in bed, she would bend over us, whispering the well-known verse :—

‘This night I lay me down to sleep,
And give my soul to Christ to keep ;
Sleep I now ; wake I never,
I give my soul to Christ for ever.’

"This became so fixed a habit with us all that in after years our soldier brother used to tell that he never, even when sleeping under arms on the ground, forgot to repeat this prayer."²

v. 3.—*Early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up* (Prayer-Book Version).

¹ "New Letters," Vol. I, pp. 27, 28.

² "Life of Archbishop Tait," Vol. I, p. 8.

Bishop Bury says, in his account of an Episcopal Mission to British Honduras and Central America :—

“ As I stood one morning, according to custom, at the door of one of my timber churches in Costa Rica, to say good-bye to the people after the Early Celebration, before leaving them for that year, a tall, strong negro came out, leading his little boy of seven by the hand. When he and I had expressed our mutual goodwill in the usual ‘ God bless you ’ and ‘ God speed,’ he glanced down at his little son, who at once, looking timidly up at me as he did so, recited a text, ‘ Early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up ’. It was a text I had taken weeks before at their Children’s Service, and the father wished his bishop to see that one small person out of the congregation remembered what had been said. But I place the incident here because it will always be to me typical and emblematic. Whenever I am thinking of the future of the dark race, I shall see again that little black face turned wistfully up into mine, and I shall feel that it is thus that the negro race is ‘ looking up ’ into the face of the white race all over the world to-day.”¹

v 8.—*Make Thy way straight before my face* (with Psalm LI. 12, 13).

Dr. James MacGregor became minister of the High Church, Paisley, at the age of twenty-three. He wrote in his diary for 11 November, 1855: “ My first sermon in Paisley, as minister of the High Church; text—‘ Make Thy way straight before my face. . . Uphold me with Thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.’ ”²

vi. 1.—*O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure.*

Cardinal Vaughan was so ill at the age of twenty-two that it was feared he could not live to attain his heart’s desire—the priesthood. A special dispensation from the Holy See was granted to him. Noting the favour in his diary he wrote: “ O Lord, do not chasten me too severely, and look on my wretched-

¹ “ A Bishop among Bananas.”

² “ Life of Dr. MacGregor,” p. 13.

ness before You turn Your eyes from me and allow me to sit in troubles, among the terrors of devils. I am weakness and poverty. There is no spirit of virtue in me but what You infuse—there is no love of You and of Your House but what comes from Yourself. My health is failing, and now that I am nearer the goal of my long and fervent aspirations, I seem to be retiring unwillingly from it. . . . I feel useless and a burden to myself. I fear I shall never be of any avail to work for our Lord. . . . My mind is heavy and clogged, and I cannot raise it as I would to Heaven. Prayer is hard and difficult—I want to love God and to serve Him, but He seems to leave me and to give me up. I am useless to Him. I have offered my services to Him and they have been declined.”¹

VI. 3.—*But thou, O Lord, how long?*

Cardinal Vaughan wrote, when in the months before his ordination he was tried with temptation: “In vain I call on Jesus and Mary, and sign my forehead and my eyes and my mouth. The thoughts obtrude themselves in clouds. They are like flies that swarm again as soon as they are beaten off. I cry out ‘How long, O Lord, how long?’”

PSALM VIII.

VIII. 3.—*When I consider Thy heavens.*

Emerson wrote to Carlyle in 1842: “When I go out of doors in the summer night, and see how high the stars are, I am persuaded that there is time enough here or somewhere, for all that I must do; and the good world manifests very little impatience.”²

In the “Life of G. F. Watts” there is a story of a young man whose early death the artist ever believed to be a serious loss to the world. “George Watts was painting the portrait of the lad’s father, a man who had had some success in business. Though the family were not altogether congenial to him, the mother being a vain and foolish woman, on one occasion when he was invited to dine and spend the evening, he accepted. When he rose to go, rather to his annoyance, the son of the house, then a lad of about fifteen or sixteen years old, whom he knew to be leading a very fast life, got up also and offered to walk across

¹ J. G. Snead-Cox, “Life of Cardinal Vaughan,” Vol. I, pp. 52, 53.

² “Correspondence,” Vol. II, p. 3.

the park with him. And so it was that, under the dome of a sky brilliant with stars, the two pacing along together came to talk of many things, when suddenly some word that was said caused the younger of the two to open his heart and to make confession of his life. Plunged from his earliest days by a dissolute father into vicious company and vicious ways, something now stirred within him to make him realize the misery of it all. They were but as 'ships that pass in the night,' and did not cross each other's way again for several years, four of which George had spent in Italy.

"When they met again in the studio of Behnes, the boy had grown to manhood; tall and handsome—a brilliant talker and a delightful companion. He was deep in the study of some branch of science—at one of the Universities, I think; his professors predicting for him a very distinguished career, but this promise was unhappily ended by an early death. When they were alone he confided to George that he dated the whole change in his life from the night when they had walked together across the park.

"When I asked what had been said, I remember the answer was simply, 'We talked of the stars'." ¹

VIII. 5, 6.—*Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands.*

Dean Stanley reminds us that these words were used in the popular hymn to St. Thomas à Becket, sung by the pilgrims as they mounted the steps to his shrine in Canterbury Cathedral. "The long and deep indentations on the surface of the stones even now bear witness to the devotion and the number of those who once ascended to the sacred platform of the eastern chapel. The popular hymn to St. Thomas, if it was not suggested, must at least have been rendered doubly impressive, by this continual ascent:—

"Tu, per Thomae sanguinem
Quem pro te impendit,
Fac nos Christo scandere
Quo Thomas ascendit.

¹ Vol. I, pp. 35-37.

Gloriâ et honore coronasti eum, Domine,
 Et constituisti eum supra opera manuum tuarum
 Et ejus meritis et precibus a Gehennae incendiis liberemur.' ”

ix. 10.—*Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee.*

Mr. Hare, in his “Wanderings in Spain,” says that the badge of “El Nodo” is borne proudly over the gates of Seville and its Alcazar. It was given by Alonzo el Sabio, when that town alone was faithful to him in his misfortunes, and the motto is “No m’ha dejado” (“She has not deserted me”), *Madeja* being expressed by the central figure representing a *skein*.

ix. 13.—*Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death.*

Sainte-Beuve, in his “Port-Royal,” tells how this verse comforted Saint-Cyran during his captivity at Vincennes.

The first experiences of his imprisonment were hard to bear, and he sank into deepest anguish. He was tortured by horrible visions, and by such dread of the Divine judgments that perspiration flowed from him in cold streams. The words he read in the Bible served only to increase his terror. He asked himself, “Have I wandered out of the path like a blind man? have I been a blind leader of the blind?” The word of God was like a two-edged sword, piercing even to the marrow of his bones; temptation, in every meaning of that word, overwhelmed him. Yet he would not wholly yield. Lying prostrate on the ground, he sought refuge in prayer, and although the bitter waves rolled over him, yet he kept his head above water, humbled as he was in the depths of his soul,—till at last one day as he closed his prayer, he asked God to reveal what his true state was in the sight of the Divine majesty. The first verse he read as he opened the Bible was Psalm ix. 13, “qui exaltas me de portis mortis” (“Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death”). Verse 14 continues, “That I may show forth all Thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion,” etc. From that moment his mind regained its wonted calm.

xi. 4.—*The Lord’s throne is in heaven.*

Mère Angélique of Port-Royal, on hearing of the death of Saint-Cyran, could find no words to express her sorrow except the utterance of the simplest faith in Divine Providence;

"Dominus in coelo!" she repeated ("The Lord is in heaven").

xiii.—Dr. Marcus Dods wrote at the age of twenty-four to his sister Marcia: "If you can direct me to anything more exquisite than the thirteenth Psalm, I will follow your direction with a happiness not often attaching to earthly pursuits".¹

xiii. 3.—*Lighten mine eyes.*

Moses Maimonides, the Jewish Talmudist of Spain, was proclaimed as "the Enlightener of the eyes of Israel". When he died, funeral services and fasts were observed in many synagogues all over the world.²

xiv. 1.—*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.*

When Diderot visited the Metropolitan Plato at the request of the Empress Catherine of Russia, he opened the conversation with the words: "Non est Deus" ("There is no God"). Plato was ready with the instant retort, "Dixit stultus in corde suo, 'Non est Deus'."

xv. 3.—*He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour* (Prayer-Book Version).

St. Augustine had written over the table at which he entertained his friends these two lines:—

"He that is wont to slander absent men
May never at this table sit again."

xvi. 5.—*The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup.*

Paxton Hood in his "Scottish Characteristics," tells of a building in the High Street of Edinburgh, belonging to the period of James VI, which has the following inscription, with a hand pointing to it: "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and my cup; Thou maintainest my lot".

xvi. 6.—*The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places.*

Mr. G. W. E. Russell, grandson of the sixth Duke of Bedford, writes thus of his childhood at Woburn:—

¹ "Early Letters," p. 137.

² C. F. Abbott, "Israel in Europe," p. 76.

"Our home, in its outward aspects, was extremely bright and cheerful. We had, as a family, a keen sense of fun, much contempt for convention, and great fluency of speech; and our material surroundings were such as to make life enjoyable. Even as a child, I used to say to myself, when cantering among Scotch firs and rhododendrons, 'The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places'." ¹

On the first Sunday after his marriage to Miss Isabella Dickson, Dr. Andrew Bonar, whose quiet humour was the delight of his friends, gave out in church these lines of the sixteenth Psalm to be sung:—

"Unto me happily the lines
In pleasant places fell;
Yea, the inheritance I got
In beauty doth excel." ²

xvi. 10, 11.—Edward Irving's widow told John McLeod Campbell that when her husband was dying, she repeated to him the words, "Thou wilt not suffer Thine holy one to see corruption," when he sang over twice that which follows, "Thou hast made known to me the path of life," etc., and, she said, with great triumph. ³

xvi. 11.—King George III selected as the burial anthem for his beloved daughter the Princess Amelia, the concluding verse of the sixteenth Psalm, which he and his daughter had often sung together: "Thou shalt show me the path of life. In Thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore". The Princess passed away in 1810, at the age of twenty-seven. Her biographer, Mr. Childe-Pemberton, says that her last words to her blind and stricken father were these, "Remember me, but do not grieve for me".

xvii. 3.—*I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.* Frances Willard's biographer tells us that in the early days of her work three friends came to see Frances, and being "greatly aroused over an act of grave injustice towards her,

¹ "One Look Back," p. 11.

² "Reminiscences," p. 26.

³ "Memorials of John McLeod Campbell," Vol. I, p. 127.

were freeing their minds about the offender". Miss Willard listened to them only for a short time. Then she fetched her Bible and opened at Psalm xvii. 3, "I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress". "I'm going to sign off from speaking ill of people," she said, "and I want you to take this pledge with me."

xvii. 8.—*Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings.*

Alexander Peden wrote to the prisoners in Dunnottar Castle: "It is best for you to keep under the shadow of God's wings, and to cast the lap of Christ's cloke over your head until ye hear Him say that the brunt of the battle is over and the shower is slackened"¹

xvii. 15.—*I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness.*

"It is no small element in the comfort of the hope, 'When I awake I shall be satisfied with Thy likeness,' that the love which is the likeness hoped for, is love to our brothers and sisters, as well as love to our Father."²

The words "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" are inscribed on the granite obelisk which marks the resting-place of Dr. Thomas Binney in Abney Park Cemetery.

It is the text on the window in Lambeth Palace sacred to the memory of Craufurd Tait, only son of Archbishop Tait. The inscription reminds us of the chief facts in his short career:—

"Born at Rugby, spared in the fever which desolated his father's home at Carlisle in his childhood, he died at Stone House, Thanet, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, on the eve of the Lord's Ascension, 29 May, 1878.

"As for me, I will behold Thy presence in righteousness, and when I awake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it."³

¹ "Six Saints of the Covenant," Vol. I, p. 114.

² John McLeod Campbell.

³ For the connexion of this verse with Henri Perreyve and Susannah Wesley, see the "Expositor's Dictionary of Texts," Vol. I, p. 377.

xviii. 28.—*Thou wilt light my candle.*

“Think then, my soul, that death is but a groom,
Which brings a taper to the outward room,
Whence thou spiest first a little glimmering light,
And after brings it nearer to thy sight;
For such approach doth heaven make in death.”

—JOHN DONNE.

xviii. 35 (Prayer-Book Version).—“The Christian must be friends with every day, with its narrow details, its homely atmosphere; its loving correction must make him great.”

—DORA GREENWELL.

PSALM XIX.

“It is a fine thought,” said Dr. John Duncan, “the eternal present in Nature’s praise of God. ‘The heavens are declaring the glory of God,’ etc.—one day uttering speech to another, and one night teaching its successor.”¹

When Prof. Blackie was dying, he talked of the songs of Burns and of the Psalms of David, and the nineteenth Psalm, the first that he learnt in childhood, was the last upon his lips. His last words on earth were, “The Psalms of David and the songs of Burns, but the Psalmist first”. With a smile, and repeating “Psalms, poetry,” he passed into unconsciousness.

xix. 1.—*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork.*

“May it be no wrong

Blest Heavens, to you, and your Superior song,
That we, dark Sons of Dust and Sorrow,

A while Dare borrow

The Name of your Delights and our Desires,
And fit it to so farr inferior Lyres.

Our murmurs have their Musick too,

Ye mighty Orbes, as well as you,

Nor yeilds the noblest Nest

Of warbling Seraphim to the eares of Love,

A choicer Lesson than the joyfull Brest

Of a poor panting Turtle-Dove.

¹ “Colloquia Peripatetica.”

And we, low worms have leave to doe
The same bright Busyness (Ye Third Heavens) with you."

—RICHARD CRASHAW.

xix. 3.—*There is no speech nor language ; their voice cannot be heard (R.V.).*

"*Lorenzo.* Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins ;
Such harmony is in immortal souls ;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."
—"Merchant of Venice," Act v. sc. i.

xix. 3, 4.—Luther wrote : " In the Church it is not enough that books should be written and read, but it is necessary that there should be speaking and hearing. Therefore Christ wrote nothing, but spoke everything. The Apostles wrote little, but spoke a great deal. The Scripture might have read in Psalm xix : ' Their book is gone out into all lands,' but the text runs : ' Their sound is gone out into all lands' (their sound, i.e. the living voice) : ' and their words (not their writings) to the ends of the world '. And further : ' There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard '. Mark this, ' where their voice is not heard '. The verse does not read ' where their books are not read '. For the office of the New Testament is not comprised in lifeless tables of stone, but in the sound of the living voice. Now God *speaks* in the Church, having in former times given writings to the Jewish people. Through holy Scripture He proclaimed the gospel, but by the living word He completes and fulfils the gospel. Therefore we should aim rather at having many preachers in the Church than many writers."

These words of Luther were chosen by Dr. Gustav Kauer as the motto of his address on C. H. Spurgeon, published at Hamburg in 1892.

xx. 8.—*They are brought down and fallen : but we are risen, and stand upright.*

A sad use of this verse is reported by Gilbert White of Selborne, in his account of the history of the parish :—

“Vicar Longworth,” he says, “used frequently to mention to his sons, who told it to my relations, that the Sunday after his deprivation [under Cromwell] his puritanical successor stepped into the pulpit with no small petulance and exultation ; and began his sermon from Psalm xx. 8 : ‘They are brought down and fallen : but we are risen, and stand upright’.” The vicar was restored in 1660, and continued in his place for eighteen years.

PSALM XXII.

Zachariah Coleman, in “The Revolution in Tanner’s Lane,” turned to this Psalm in a time of sorrow, when his dainty wife and perfect housekeeper had changed into a domestic shrew. He opened his father’s family Bible and turned to the fly-leaf on which was written the family history.

“There was the record of Zachariah’s own marriage. A cloud of shapeless, inarticulate sentiment obscured the man’s eyes and brain. He could not define what he felt, but he did feel. He could not bear it, and he shut the book, opening it again at the twenty-second Psalm—the one which the disciples of Jesus called to mind on the night of the crucifixion. It was one which Mr. Bradshaw often read, and Zachariah had noted in it a few corrections made in the translation :—

“‘My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me ? . . . Our fathers trusted in Thee ; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them. . . . Be not far from me ; for trouble is near ; for there is none to help. . . . Be Thou not far from me, O Lord : O my strength, haste Thee to help me. . . . Save me from the lion’s mouth : and from the horns of the wild oxen Thou hast answered me.’

“‘From the horns of the wild oxen’—that correction had often been precious to Zachariah. When at the point of being pinned to the ground—so he understood it—help had arisen ; risen up from the earth, and might again arise.”

The twenty-second Psalm, St. Augustine says, was sung in

the North African congregation at the Easter celebration of the Lord's Supper.¹

"I am much delighted and instructed," said Coleridge, "by the hypothesis, which I think is probable, that our Lord in repeating *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*, really recited the whole or a part of the twenty-second Psalm. It is impossible to read that Psalm without the liveliest feelings of love, gratitude, and sympathy. It is, indeed, a wonderful prophecy, whatever might or might not have been David's notion when he composed it. Whether Christ did audibly repeat the whole or not, it is certain, I think, that he did it mentally, and said aloud what was sufficient to enable his followers to do the same."²

XXII. 5.—*They trusted in Thee, and were not confounded.*

Bunyan quotes in "Grace Abounding" a passage corresponding to this text in Ecclesiasticus II. 10:—

"For several days," he writes, "I was greatly assaulted and perplexed, and was often, when I have been walking, ready to sink where I went, with faintness in my mind; but one day, after I had been so many weeks oppressed and cast down therewith, as I was now quite giving up the ghost of all my hopes of ever attaining life, that sentence fell with weight upon my spirit, *Look at the generations of old and see, did any ever trust in God and were confounded?* at which I was greatly lightened, and encouraged in my soul; for thus, at that very instant, it was expounded to me; *Begin at the beginning of Genesis and read to the end of the Revelations, and see if you can find that there were ever any that trusted in the Lord and were confounded.*" He could not find the comforting verse in the Bible, "but at last, casting my eye upon the *Apocrypha* books I found it in Ecclesiasticus. This, at the first, did somewhat daunt me; but because by this time I had got more experience of the love and kindness of God, it troubled me the less, especially when I considered that though it was not in those texts which we call holy and canonical; yet forasmuch as this sentence was the sum and substance of many of the promises, it was my duty to take the comfort of it; and I bless God for that word, for it was of God to me; that word doth still at times shine before my face."

¹ "Psalm Mosaics," p. 100.

² "Table Talk."

xxii. 16.—*They pierced my hands and my feet.*

Rudyard Kipling, in his poem, "Cold Iron," tells of a Baron who rebelled against his King, and when defeated, feared that as he had taken the sword, he must perish by the sword:—

"Yet his King made answer (few such Kings there be!),

'Here is Bread and here is Wine—sit and sup with me.

Eat and drink in Mary's name, the whiles I do recall

How Iron—Cold Iron—can be master of men all!'

He took the Wine and blessed It; He blessed and brake the Bread.

With His own Hands He served Them, and presently He said:

'Look! these Hands they pierced with nails outside My city wall

Show Iron—Cold Iron—to be master of men all!

Crowns are for the valiant—sceptres for the bold!

Thrones and powers for mighty men who dare to take and hold.'

'Nay!' said the Baron, kneeling in his hall,

'But Iron—Cold Iron—is master of man all!

Iron, out of Calvary, is master of man all!'"¹

PSALM XXIII.

"Prosperity cannot read the twenty-third Psalm," said Dr. Parker, "yet the illustrations of its use in life and literature are not for the most part of a sad complexion. We group a few examples under five heads:—

THE PSALM IN YOUTH.

James Chalmers of New Guinea wrote in a brief autobiographical fragment on his early days:—

"My father was very seldom at home, and I can remember that I earned my first money on one occasion when he had walked from Inveraray, and was spending the Sunday with us. He promised to give me a sixpence if I could repeat the 23rd Psalm before night. I did it without a mistake, and I got the prize, but this large sum of money was too much for me to deal

¹ "Rewards and Fairies," pp. 25, 26.

with, and so I handed it to my mother, and I got one penny of it as my share.”¹

Dean Boyle gives high praise in his *Recollections* to Dr. Muir, one of the leaders of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh about the time of the Disruption. “Dr. Muir was a man of great dignity of manner, and his simple reverence in conducting family prayer made a deep impression. There was a gentlemanliness, if I may venture to call it so, about him, which made his simple counsels tell. ‘Try to read a few verses of your Bible every day; say a short psalm like the twenty-third as you lay your head on your pillow; pray for your friends; do not forget me sometimes; I shall not forget you.’ Words like these, spoken to a boy, soon to be launched into a new scene, were not likely to escape the memory.”

IN EARLY MANHOOD.

James Russell Lowell was twenty-five when he wrote to a bereaved friend: “The older I grow, the less am I affected by the outward observances and forms of religion, and the more confidingness and affection do I feel towards God. ‘He leadeth me in green pastures.’ Trust in Providence is no longer a meaningless phrase to me. The thought of it has oftener brought happy tears into my eyes than any other thought except that of my beloved Maria. It is, therefore, no idle form when I tell you to lean on God. I know that it is needless to say this to you, but I know also that it is always sweet and consoling to have our impulses seconded by the sympathy of our friends.

‘We all are tall enough to reach God’s hand,
The angels are no taller.’”

IN MID LIFE.

Macaulay says in his essay on Addison: “Of the Psalms his favourite was that which represents the Ruler of all things under the endearing image of a shepherd, whose crook guides the flock safe, through gloomy and desolate glens, to meadows well-watered and rich with herbage. On that goodness to which he ascribed all the happiness of his life, he relied in the hour of death with the love which casteth out fear.”

¹ “James Chalmers; his Autobiography and Letters,” by Richard Lovett, p. 16.

After the Empress Eugénie had fled from Paris in September, 1870, she went to the York Hotel at Ryde. Dr. Evans, the American dentist who had arranged the flight, went out to make inquiries. "Upon my return to the hotel," he writes, "I found the Empress sitting with an open Bible in her hand. Her Majesty, not being aware of the English custom of keeping in the rooms of hotels copies of the Old and New Testaments, told me that she was quite surprised to find this book upon the table, and that, regarding its presence as providential, she had opened that volume to see upon what passage her eyes would first fall. She had found some very hopeful and encouraging words; they were, 'The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters.' In consequence of this oracular message, or from some other cause more natural, she had become quite cheerful and composed."

IN SICKNESS.

In March, 1537, Luther rested at Grimma on his return to Wittenberg after his dangerous illness at Schmalkalden. Melanchthon, who had joined him on the return journey, wrote on the 13th to Spalatin:—

"Dr. Luther, by God's favour, is gradually regaining strength. Here also he has slept pretty well and has had a better appetite. To-day he was more cheerful, and he dictated to me some lines he composed yesterday on the twenty-third Psalm, which I felt I must send you, because I knew that you, with your great love both for religion and poetry, would be very much pleased with them:—

*'Ipse Deus pastor meus est, nil deficiet me;
Laetis me fecit pascere graminibus,
Quaeque sitim sedant, ad aquas deduxit amoenas;
Hinc redeunt vires artubus atque vigor.'*

There you have an epigram composed by Luther. Although it is short, it embraces very aptly the chief thoughts of the psalm."¹

IN THE HOUR OF DEATH.

Of the last hours of the saint and scholar, Bishop Francis Paget, his brother writes:—

¹ "Corp. Ref." Vol. III, col. 326.

“To another, who spoke of his seeing again those whom he had loved, he said, ‘So soon’. Last of all, he followed, with a steady voice, the words of the psalm, ‘The Lord is my Shepherd’.”

When Dr. Duff was dying, his daughter repeated to him the twenty-third Psalm, as he lay apparently unconscious, and he responded at the end of each verse.

Edward Irving had this psalm on his dying lips. “He grew delirious in those solemn evenings and ‘wandered’ in his mind. Such wandering! So long as his articulation continued so distinct that we could make anything of his words, it was of spiritual things he spoke, praying for himself, his Church and his relations. Once in this wonderful monologue he was heard murmuring to himself sonorous syllables of some unknown tongue. Listening to these mysterious sounds, Dr. Martin (his father-in-law) found them to be Hebrew measures of the twenty-third Psalm: ‘The Lord is my Shepherd,’ unto the latter verses of which the dying voice swelled as the watcher took up and echoed the wonderful strain: ‘Though I walk through the shadow of death, I will fear no evil’.”¹

XXIII. 2.—*He leadeth me beside the still waters.*

Caroline Fox wrote of the death-bed of her friend Dr. Calvert: “His longings for death this morning were most touching. ‘Oh lead me to the still waters,’ was his cry.”²

XXIII. 4.—*The valley of the shadow of death.*

Archbishop Laud used these words on the scaffold:—

“Lord, I am coming as fast as I can. I know I must pass through the shadow of death before I can come to see Thee. But that is only *umbra mortis*, a shadow of death, a little darkness upon nature; since Thou, Lord, by Thy goodness, has broken the jaws and the power of death.”

Perhaps the most beautiful use of the psalm in fiction is David Elginbrod’s description of his visit to the dying shepherd.

David had heard that a poor old man of his acquaintance was dying, and immediately set out to visit him, at a distance of two or three miles. He returned in the evening, and as he sat down to the table, he said:—

¹ Mrs. Oliphant’s “Life of Irving”.

² “Journals of Caroline Fox,” Vol. I, p. 283.

"I hae seen a wonnerfu' sicht sin' I saw you, Mr. Sutherland'. I gaed to see an auld Christian, whase body an' brain are nigh worn oot. He was never onything remarkable for intellec, and jist took what the minister tellt him for true, an' keepit the guid o't; for his hert was aye richt, an' his faith a hantle stronger than maybe it had ony richt to be, accordin' to his ain opingans; but, hech! there's something far better nor his opingans i' the hert o' ilka God-fearin' body. Whan I gaed butt the hoose, he was sittin' in's auld arm-chair by the side o' the fire, an' his face luikit dazed like. There was no licht in't but what cam' noo an' than frae a low i' the fire. The snaw was driftin' a wee about the bit winnock, an' his auld een was fixed upo't; an' a' 'at he said, takin' no notice o' me, was jist, 'The birdies is flutterin'; the birdies is flutterin'.' I spak' till him, an' tried to roose him, wi' ae thing after anither, bit I nicht as weel hae spoken to the door-cheek, for a' the notice that he took. Never a word he spak', but aye, 'The birdies is flutterin'.' At last, it cam' to my min' 'at the body was aye fu' o' ane o' the psalms in particler; an' sae I jist said to him at last: 'John, hae ye forgotten the twenty-third psalm?' 'Forgotten the twenty-third psalm!' quo' he; an' his face lighted up in a moment frae the inside: '*The Lord's my shepherd,—an' I hae followed Him through a' the smorin' drift o' the warl,*' an' He'll bring me to the green pastures an' the still waters o' His summer-kingdom at the lang last. *I shall not want.* An' I hae wanted for naething, naething.' He had been a shepherd himsel' in's young days. And so on he gaed, wi' a kin' o' a personal commentary on the haill psalm frae beginnin' to en', and syne he jist fell back into the auld croonin' sang, 'The birdies is flutterin'; the birdies is flutterin'.' The licht deed oot o' his face, an' a' that I could say could na' bring back the licht to his face, nor the sense to his tongue. He'll sune be in a better warl'." ¹

xxiv. 1.—*The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.*

St. Chrysostom wrote during his exile: "When driven from the city, I cared nothing for it. But I said to myself, 'If the

¹ George Macdonald, "David Elginbrod".

Empress wishes to banish me, let her banish me ; "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" '."

Mr. John Welwood preached from this text "in the south, near the Border". "A gentleman," says Patrick Walker, "came four or five miles to stop him from preaching on his ground. Mr. Welwood was begun ere he came ; Mr. Welwood had sung in the twenty-fourth Psalm, 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof' ; and prefacing upon the same, as their ordinary then was, said : 'Tho' the earth be the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, etc., yet the poor fools of the world will not allow a bit of His earth to preach His gospel upon'. The gentleman standing by the side of the people, going to discharge him from preaching upon his ground, these words so pierced him that he sat down and heard him through the day, went home and set up the worship of God in his family, and very shortly thereafter joined himself in a society meeting, where my informer was present, and thereafter became a sufferer himself but not unto death." ¹

XXIV. 3, 4.—*Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?*

Dean Inge applies these words to the Christian mystics : "These explorers of the high places of the spiritual life have only one thing in common—they have observed the conditions laid down once for all for the mystic in the twenty-fourth Psalm, 'Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart ; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.'" ²

XXIV. 7, 8.—*The King of glory.*

Rabbi Duncan has these thoughts on the four words "The King of glory" : "There are some meditative minds that can seize hold of this phrase and of the truth that is in it, and let it drift through their inmost being, or rather allow their inmost being to drift through it, in silent awe and gladness. When our intuitions work freely, where reverence and love unite with a wondering insight there is always peace, and sometimes there are gleams (outbursts) of inexpressible joy." ³

¹ "Six Saints of the Covenant," Vol. II, p. 110.

² "Christian Mysticism," p. 312.

³ "Colloquia Peripatetica."

xxiv. 7, 9.—*Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and the King of glory shall come in.*

In one of its Latin forms, this verse was quoted in the formula for conferring the degree of Doctor of Laws at Wittenberg University in the Reformation age. The address contained these words: "For as States were divinely appointed, that the knowledge of God might shine forth in human society, so all State appointments ought to contribute to the glory of Christ, as it is written, 'Open your gates, ye princes, and the King of glory shall come in'."¹

xxv. 1.—*Unto Thee, O Lord, will I lift up my soul; my God, I have put my trust in Thee.*

St. Louis at his coronation uttered these words.

xxv. 2 (with xxxi. 1).—*O my God, I trust in Thee: let me not be ashamed.*

Charles Kingsley wrote in 1857 to Mr. Maurice: "I can think of nothing but these Indian massacres. The moral problems they involve make me half wild. . . . I never have looked hell so close in the face as I have been doing of late. Wherefore, I hope thereby to get fresh power to rise, and to lift others heavenward. But the power has not come yet. . . . And I can only cry, 'O Lord, in Thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded'."

xxv. 10.—*All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth.*

Dante wrote in canto vii. of his "Paradise":—

"Goodness celestial, whose broad signature
Is on the universe, of all its ways
To raise ye up, was fain to leave out none."

Dr. Carroll remarks on this passage:—

"In the rendering of this satisfaction in which man is reinstated in his full original life, the Divine goodness resolved 'to proceed by all its ways,' in order the better to reveal the love of the Heart from which it flowed. The reference is to Psalm xxv. 10, 'Universae viae Domini misericordia et veritas,' 'All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth,' or *justice*, as Aquinas interprets *veritas*: 'The justice of God is fittingly called truth, because it constitutes the order in things which

¹Quoted by Dr. Otto Clemen in his recent pamphlet, "Studien zu Melanchthons Reden und Gedichten" (1913), p. 13.

conforms to the idea of His wisdom, which is His law'. It is on these two feet of mercy and justice, to borrow St. Bernard's quaint figure, that, in the Incarnation, God goes forth to the great process of salvation." ¹

XXVI.—When Pius VII received Napoleon's notice of his deposition, he knelt down and recited the psalm, "Judica me, Domine".

XXVI. 8 (with Ps. LXXXIV.).—*Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth.*

St. Jerome tells us that when the holy Paula was dying at Bethlehem she murmured as if she were going to visit friends, and take leave of strangers, "'O Lord, I have loved the beautiful order of Thy house, and the place of the habitation of Thy glory,' and 'How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O God of power, my soul hath even fainted with the desire of entering into the court of Thy house,' and 'I have chosen to be an abject in the house of my God rather than to dwell in the tabernacles of sinners'. And when I asked her why she was silent, and would not answer us, and whether she was in any pain, she answered me in Greek, that 'she had no trouble, but that she saw all things before her in tranquillity and peace'. After this she was silent, and shutting her eyes, as one who now despised mortal things, she repeated these verses so that we could hardly hear what she said, even till she breathed out her soul, and applying her finger to her mouth, she made the sign of the cross upon her lips." ²

PSALM XXVII.

XXVII. 1.—*Dominus illuminatio mea* is the motto of the University of Oxford.

XXVII. 4 (with xc. 17).—*To behold the beauty of the Lord.*

"Show me more love, my dearest Lord,
I cannot think, nor speak, nor pray;
Thy work stands still; my strength is stored
In Thee alone; oh, come away!

¹ "In Patria," p. 124.

² E. L. Cutts, "Saint Jerome," p. 203.

Show me thy beauties, *call them mine*
My heart and tongue will soon be Thine."

—DORA GREENWELL.¹

XXVII. 10.—*When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.*

Melanchthon wrote in 1527 to Camerarius, who was doubtful whether he had acted wisely in accepting an educational post at Nuremberg: "Think how much more unfortunate is my exile [at Wittenberg] far from home, far from my friends and kinsfolk, amongst men with whom I could not converse if I did not know Latin. . . . But I bear these things bravely, and remain firmly fixed here, not induced to do so by any prudence or diligence of my own, but by God, whose guardianship I am glad to think is over me, and I have sure evidence that this is so. Therefore, my Joachim, I bid you be of good courage, and hope for the best, and commit your fortunes and your safety to God. He alone, amid so many human evils, is a sure refuge and haven. Remember these words, 'My father and mother have forsaken me, but the Lord took me up'." ²

St. Gregory of Nazianzen wrote to a friend after the death of St. Basil :—

"You inquire how I am; I answer, Very ill. I no longer have Basil, no longer Cæsarius—the one my spiritual, the other my natural brother. I may say, too, with David, 'My father and my mother have forsaken me'. My body is sickly; age shows itself on my head; my cares grow more complicated; business accumulates upon me; friends prove untrue; the Church is without shepherds; good is disappearing; evil presents itself barefaced. We are journeying in the night. Christ sleepeth. What then is to be done? Alas, there is only one escape for me from these evils, and that is death! But that *which lies beyond* would also frighten me, were I obliged to judge of it from my feelings *on this side* the grave." ³

Dean Goulburn mentions in his biography of Dean Burgon that in August, 1858, nearly four years after the death of his

¹ From an old poem, quoted in "The Patience of Hope".

² "Corp. Ref.," Vol. I, col. 859.

³ Quoted in the "Westminster Review," October, 1851, p. 113, in a review of Ullmann's work on Gregory.

mother, Burgon lost his aged and invalid father. He then "experienced that sense of desolateness and being left alone in the world, which no bereavement brings with it so keenly as that of parents. It was possible when David heard of the death of his father and mother in the land of Moab (see 1 Sam. xxii. 3) that, smarting under this experience, and with a reference to the office of the 'gathering host' in the march through the wilderness—whose duty it was, coming in the rear of the other tribes, to take up and carry forward any sick or infirm folks who might have dropped from mules or caravans without being noticed—he sang those sweet words of consolation, put into his mouth by the Holy Spirit, 'when my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will gather me'." ¹

xxvii. 14 (with xxxi. 25 and Hab. ii. 3).—*Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart.*

On 20 July, 1530, while the Diet of Augsburg was sitting, Luther wrote from Coburg to Spalatin and thanked him for his assiduity as a correspondent.

"I am a hermit here," he added, "and like the earth without water, cannot produce anything worth writing to you, except that with groans and sighs and all the forces and acts of prayer I ascend to heaven and knock, worthless as I am, at His gates who has said, 'knock, and it shall be opened unto you'."

He quoted the lines of Virgil:—

"O socii

Passi graviora, dabit Deus his quoque finem.

Durate et rebus vosmet servate secundis,"

and continued: "Or rather this, 'Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, ye that hope in the Lord. Though He tarry, wait for Him, for He that shall come will come, and the vision will not lie'." ²

Ruskin wrote in 1854 to a young Scottish architect, Mr. J. J. Laing: "I believe there is no means of preserving rectitude of conduct and nobleness of aim but the grace of God obtained by daily, almost hourly waiting upon Him, and continued faith in His immediate presence. Get into this habit of thought, and you need make no promises. Come short of this, and you will

¹ "Life of Dean Burgon," Vol. I, p. 245.

² Enders, "Luthers Briefwechsel," Vol. VIII, p. 122.

break them and be more discouraged than if you had made none. The great lesson we have to learn in this world is to *give it all up*. It is not so much resolution as renunciation, not so much courage as resignation, that we need. He that has once yielded thoroughly to God will yield to nothing but God.”¹

xxix.—“The language of the Psalms nowhere reaches such heights of natural grandeur as in the sublime Song of the Thunders” (xxix. 3 ff.).—ALEX. R. GORDON.²

xxix. 9.—*The Lord sitteth above the water-flood* (Prayer-Book Version).

Bishop King of Lincoln wrote in 1907: “I have found increasing comfort in the Psalms and in the collects of our Prayer Book. . . . The second Psalm is a great comfort, and the twenty-ninth Psalm, the ninth verse, ‘The Lord sitteth above the water-flood,’ or ‘The Lord sat enthroned above the flood’. Well, if He could guide the ark over that He can guide us now! To learn to trust in God is a great thing, and to keep asking God to teach us as in the 119th Psalm again and again.”³

G. H. Wilkinson wrote in 1880 to Bishop Benson at Truro: “Now as the quiet hours pass away of the day on which He died, we seem to feel that He will help us and overrule all our mistakes to His glory. From everlasting to everlasting He is there—above the water-floods. From Abraham to David and David to the Captivity, and so on and on, past St. Stephen, and all the Councils and Schisms, and past all this nineteenth century, on—till He has delivered up the kingdom to His Father.”⁴

xxx. 5.—*For His anger endureth but a moment*.

Prof. Breasted quotes from an Old Egyptian hymn to Amon, lord of Thebes, the helper of the poor:—

“Though the servant be wont to commit sin, yet is the lord wont to be gracious. The lord of Thebes spends not the whole day wroth. If he be wroth for the space of a moment, it re-

¹ E. T. Cook, “The Life of Ruskin,” Vol. I, p. 387.

² “The Poets of the Old Testament,” p. 145.

³ “Spiritual Letters,” pp. 28, 29.

⁴ “Memoir of G. H. Wilkinson,” Vol. II, p. 28.

maineth not—turns to us in graciousness, Amon turns with his breath.”¹

xxx. 7.—*Thou didst hide Thy face, and I was troubled.*

Angélique de Saint Jean wrote of her imprisonment in the Convent of the Annunciation, Paris: “Men who believe that they take everything from us, do not even touch our treasure, if God leaves in our heart the feeling of His grace; while He has only to turn away His face, and we find that we have none of those riches which we were persuaded could not be taken away from us.”²

xxx. 12.—*Thou hast turned my heaviness into joy, f.* (Prayer-Book Version).

Mr. George Russell, in his short “memorial sketch” of Canon Harry Drew, a son-in-law of Mr. Gladstone, tells us that on Easter Day, 27 March, 1910, the rector of Hawarden wrote in his diary: “Lovely day, very happy services. Up at 5 a.m. . . . I took the 8 o’clock choral celebration. One hundred and seventy-three communicants at 7 a.m. service. I took the 11 a.m. service, and midday celebration, Litany in afternoon and the service again at 6.30. Total number of communicants in Parish Church to-day, 432—I think the largest number there has ever been. *Laus Deo.*”

Mr. Russell adds: “He preached at Mattins from Psalm xxx. 12, ‘Thou hast turned my heaviness into joy: Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness’. The last words of this last sermon had a beautiful appropriateness to what the morrow should bring forth.”

Canon Drew said: “The reality of a man’s Easter joy is a fair test of his Christian sincerity. If we have at all felt sympathy with Christ in His sufferings, we must rejoice at the triumph which has ended them. If we do account our Christian Faith as indeed the pearl of great price, we must rejoice at the event, which, more than any other, demonstrates its value. If we have staked our all upon the eternal future, our hearts must indeed be glad at the memory of that majestic fact which shows that we have not wasted our efforts on some unsubstantial fancy.

¹ “Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt,” p. 352.

² C. Beard, “Port-Royal,” Vol. I, p. 398.

May Christ our Lord vouchsafe to deepen in us this joy in His blessed Resurrection ; to give it more and more practical expression in our lives ; and to satisfy it perfectly hereafter in that world, where, through His Death and Resurrection, we shall be like Him and shall see Him as He is."

On Easter Monday evening, while paying a pastoral visit, Canon Drew was attacked by the first symptoms of his fatal malady. An operation was performed, but he sank rapidly and died on the Thursday evening. On Monday, 4 April, his body was laid in the beautiful churchyard of Hawarden. We may quote the tribute of the late Right Hon. Alfred Lyttelton, as given by Mr. Russell :—

"He seemed to me a perfect comrade and counsellor. Of how few can one say in the world that they never jarred us, or wounded us, or contributed one fraction to our baser part ! May we be as he was, when our time is finished."

PSALM xxxI.

xxxI. 1.—*Deliver me in Thy righteousness.*

Luther said : "When I first read the Psalms and sang, 'Deliver me in Thy righteousness,' I was always afraid, and I hated the words, 'The righteousness of God, the judgment of God, the work of God,' for I knew nothing save that *justitia Dei* meant His stern judgment. But *misericordia Dei*, *adjutorium Dei*—these words I liked better. Praise God, I came to understand the matter and to know that *justitia Dei* meant the righteousness by which He justifies us, through the righteousness given to us in Jesus Christ. Then I understood the grammatical meaning, and for the first time I could enjoy the Psalter."¹

xxxI. 1-8.—When Dante hung his head like a chidden child as Beatrice rebuked him for unfaithfulness, the Angels, pitying his confusion, sang "In te, Domine, speravi" ("In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust")—the first eight verses of Psalm xxxI.—("Purgatorio," canto xxx.).

xxxI. 5.—In the last moments of Melanchthon's life, his colleague, Veit Winsheim, pronounced in a clear voice the words

¹ E. Kroker, "Luthers Tischreden," pp. 211, 212.

of the Psalm, "Into Thy Hands I commend my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, Thou God of truth". He asked the dying man whether he had heard, and he answered distinctly, "Yes". This was his last utterance, though his lips were seen to move in silent prayer, and as he prayed he passed peacefully away, just as the words of Psalm xxxi. 5 were repeated to him for the third time. One of the last sentences he spoke was in reply to a question from his son-in-law, as to whether he wanted anything. He answered, "Nothing else but heaven, therefore trouble me no more with such questions".

After passing through a dangerous illness, John McLeod Campbell wrote to his niece in 1863 :—

"Oh! darling Mary, what a mercy not to have passed hence in a mist and darkness, unconscious of the great event. Yet there would have been no darkness with *Him*, nor risk to what has been committed to His trust. I feel the broad ground on which Mr. Maurice loves to place us all very precious. Yet can one give special thanks for having been brought into the fellowship of the words, 'The Lord, Whose I am and Whom I serve'.

"As to passing hence in consciousness rather than unconsciousness, I have desired of the Lord some fellowship in the words, 'Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit'." ¹

xxxI. 15.—*My times are in Thy hand.*

Dan Crawford, the African missionary, says that if you quote these words to a native, "My times are in Thy hands," he will be forced to translate it in the gorgeous words, "All my life's why's and when's and where's and wherefore's are in God's hand". ²

xxxI. 19.—*Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee: which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!*

Prof. William Robertson Smith "invariably used the Scottish version of the Psalms, and his favourite passage, which I have often heard him read with a tremor and a joy unforgettable was this :—

¹ "Memorials," Vol. II, p. 45.

² "Thinking Black," p. 483.

'How great's the goodness Thou for them
That fear Thee keep'st in store,
And wrought'st for them that trust in Thee
The sons of men before.

In secret of Thy presence Thou
Shalt hide them from man's pride,
From strife of tongues Thou closely shalt
As in a tent them hide.' ¹

XXXI. 20.—*Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man: Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.*

" 'Hide thy life,' said Epicurus, and the exquisite zest there is in doing so can only be appreciated by those who, desiring to introduce some method into their lives, have suffered from the malicious pleasure the world takes in trying to distract them till they are as shattered and empty-headed as the world itself."—MATTHEW ARNOLD.²

XXXII. 2.—Hurrell Froude wrote in 1826 :—

"Whenever I get into fresh society I find fresh temptations to act wrong. I feel ashamed to let myself appear what I approve before those who I think would ridicule it, and have an impulse to show off where I fancy I should be respected. But it is a great comfort to have confessed it all, and the other evening, when I had been summing up my account, I found in the Psalms for the evening, 'Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth no sin, and in whose spirit there is *no guile*'. I wish I could be sure that this is my case, and that I am not now deceiving myself about many things." ³

XXXII. 8.—*I will guide thee.*

When Dr. Rainy was dying in Australia, he was asked to give a message for the Church at home. His daughter repeated what he had seemed to say, asking, "Did you say God will guide the Church?" "Yes," he said, with marked emphasis, "always, always."

Cardinal Newman wrote in his "Apologia":—

¹ Sir W. Robertson Nicoll in the "British Weekly," May, 1912.

² In a letter to his sister, Mrs. Forster, 6 December, 1856.

³ "Remains" (1838).

"Mr. Keble used to quote the words of the Psalm: 'I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not like the horse and mule, which have no understanding, whose mouths must be held with bit and bridle, lest they fall upon thee.' This is the very difference, he used to say, between slaves, and friends or children. Friends do not ask for literal commands; but, from their knowledge of the speaker, they understand his half words, and from love of him they anticipate his wishes. Hence it is, that in his poem for St. Bartholomew's Day, he speaks of the 'eye of God's word'; and in the note quotes Mr. Miller, of Worcester College, who remarks in his 'Bampton Lectures,' on the special power of Scripture, as having 'this Eye, like that of a portrait, uniformly fixed upon us, turn where we will'."

xxxiv. 3.—*O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.*

Paxton Hood wrote: "Walking about among the old houses of Edinburgh, nothing was, and we may still say is, more noticeable than the frequent inscriptions over houses; of course we mean the old houses, with their fantastic timbers and stone gables, strange relics of a forgotten order of things. A handsome tenement stands not far from the Cowgate, surmounted with two ornamental gables, bearing on them the initials of the two builders, and over the main doorway the inscription, 'O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together' 1643 (in Roman characters)."

xxxiv. 6.—*This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles* (with ver. 17 and Ps. liv. 7.—*For He hath delivered me out of all trouble*).

At the head of the grave of Fredrika Bremer, the great Swedish writer, stands a monument of polished granite, with a cross on the top. On the pedestal, beneath the names and dates, the words are inscribed, according to Fredrika's own wish, "When I cried unto the Lord, He delivered me out of all my trouble".¹

xxxiv. 8.—*O taste and see how gracious the Lord is* (Prayer-Book Version).

¹ "Life and Letters of Fredrika Bremer" (translated from the Swedish), p. 100.

Cromwell wrote in 1646 to his "beloved daughter Bridget Ireton":—

"Your friends at Ely are well; your Sister Claypole is, I trust in mercy, exercised with some perplexed thoughts. She sees her own vanity and carnal mind; bewailing it, she seeks after (as I hope also) what will satisfy. And thus to be a seeker is to be of the best sect next to a finder; and such an one shall every faithful humble seeker be at the end. Happy seeker, happy finder! Who ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, without some sense of self, vanity, and badness? Who ever tasted that graciousness of His, and could go less in desire—less than pressing after full enjoyment? Dear Heart, press on; let not Husband, let not anything cool thy affections after Christ. I hope he will be an occasion to inflame them. That which is best worthy of love in thy Husband is that of the image of Christ he bears. Look on that and love it best, and all the rest for that."¹

xxxiv. 10.—*They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.*

Carlyle, in a letter of 1838 to Emerson, quoted his mother's saying, "They cannot take God's Providence from thee; thou hast never wanted yet".

xxxv. 3.—*Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.*

St. Augustine wrote in his "Confessions": "Oh! for Thy mercies' sake, tell me, O Lord my God, what Thou art unto me. *Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.* So speak, that I may hear. Behold, Lord, my heart is before Thee; open Thou the ears thereof, and *say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.* After this voice let me haste and take hold on Thee. Hide not Thy face from me. Let me die—lest I die—only let me see Thy face."²

xxxv. 20.—*Them that are quiet in the land.*

"The year 1842 was a time of Repeal Agitation in Ireland, of distress in England; the Chartist disturbances were then recent, and the Anti-Corn Law League was in the height of its career. One sentence in the 'Yearly Meeting's Epistle' [of

¹ Oliver Cromwell's "Letters and Speeches".

² Dr. Pusey's Translation.

the Quakers] ended with the words, *We trust Friends may always be found amongst those who are quiet in the land*'. John Bright sprang to his feet to express a hope that this sentence was not intended to condemn those who were striving to effect the repeal of unjust laws! The Clerk rose to call the speaker to order, but before the reproof could be uttered the young man went on: '*Now the Clerk need not fear that I will introduce politics into this assembly*,' and proceeded to make an effective speech, in which the word *corn* did not occur, but which was in effect, a defence of the action of himself and his friends." ¹

xxxvi. 8, 9.—Beatrice told Dante that it was only by drinking the river of grace, the *lumen gratiae*, that he could receive the *lumen gloriæ*, the light of glory, "which makes the Creator visible to the creature". "It is this light, according to mediaeval theology, referred to in Psalm xxxvi. 8, 9, which, obviously, was in Dante's mind: 'Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of light; *in Thy light shall we see light*.'" ²

xxxvi. 9.—*In Thy light shall we see light.*

Mr. Alfred Austin, the late Poet Laureate, mentions in his Autobiography that Father Fitzsimon, one of his masters at Stonyhurst, gave him this instruction: "Remember, my child, when difficulties present themselves to your mind to which you can find no satisfactory reply, you must humbly wait for the day when 'In lumine Ipsius videbimus lumen'. 'Looking back to that incident,' said the late Poet Laureate, 'I have always thought the words aptly represented the real inner spirit of Roman Catholicism, and have sometimes, many years later, been disposed to think that they were the germ or first seed of "The Door of Humility," not written till I was approaching three score years and ten, though long dwelt on previously.'"

Bishop King of Lincoln wrote in 1902: "I still go on in my simple superficial way, loving flowers and birds and the sunlight on the apples, and the sunset, and like to think more and

¹ Quoted by G. M. Trevelyan, "Life of John Bright," p. 105.

² J. S. Carroll, "In Patria," p. 468.

more of the verse, 'With Thee is the well of life, and in Thy light shall we see light'. And so again: 'Thou openest Thine hand and fillest all things living with plenteousness'. The flowers and the birds, and angels and men, all things that are!"¹

PSALM XXXVII.

XXXVII. 4.—*Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*

Prof. George Wilson, when a medical student, wrote:—

"I have found a strange verse in reading over the Psalms. I have not now time to look for the exact place, but it was to this effect, that he who obeys God 'shall have the desire of his own heart'. Do look at the passage. I think it is in the early Psalms, but of course to love God should be the *primary* feeling, though the secondary 'desire' will in our minds too often supplant it."²

XXXVII. 5.—Dr. Livingstone gave a friend a Bible with a verse, in the Sechuana language, and its translation. He also signed and dated the inscription. The verse is, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass". Dr. Livingstone said that text sustained him throughout his wanderings when he disappeared in the trackless solitudes and savage wilderness.

XXXVII. 7.—*Wait patiently for Him.*

"To ask and to wait, to desire and to be ready to receive—this is what God requires of us. The task suited is in proportion to our weakness, and the result to the riches of Him who bids us thus come to Him without money."—F. GODET.

Soon after his ordination to the priesthood, Cardinal Vaughan wrote in his private diary:—

"The days pass quickly and yet I am not in everything satisfied. I feel a longing for more work. My existence is dedicated to God, and yet I cannot employ it in His service. He has given me the most impatient desires and yet He checks them. He starts me, then holds me back, He bids me labour and restrains my hands. I am pining all the day for strength and to

¹ "Spiritual Letters," p. 182.

² "Memoir of George Wilson," p. 135.

be slaving for Him. What do I want but to die in His service who died in my service? What on earth remains for me but the glory of my God? I have vowed myself to Him. I have had my hands consecrated to labour, and my heart has sworn to love Him. What then remains but the execution?"

At the time when these words were written, Herbert Vaughan had definitely decided to forgo his own wish to work as a missionary in Wales, and to accept the routine work of a teacher in the ecclesiastical seminary of Westminster.¹

xxxvii. 8.—*Fret not thyself.*

After describing the querulous talk of Mr. Bertram, Laird of Ellangowan, with his guest, Guy Mannering, Sir Walter Scott remarks:—

"Here was a country gentleman, whose most estimable quality seemed his perfect good nature, secretly fretting himself and murmuring against others, for causes which, compared with any real evil in life, must weigh like dust in the balance. But such is the equal distribution of Providence. To those who lie out of the road of great afflictions are assigned petty vexations, which answer all the purpose of disturbing their serenity; and every reader must have observed, that neither natural apathy nor acquired philosophy can render country gentlemen insensible to the grievances which occur at elections, quarter-sessions, and meetings of trustees."

xxxvii. 11.—*The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*

Cardinal Newman wrote in 1879: "Christianity has been too often in what seemed deadly peril, that we should fear for it any new trial now. So far is certain; on the other hand, what is uncertain, and in these great contests commonly is uncertain, and what is commonly a great surprise, when it is witnessed, is the particular mode by which, in the event, Providence rescues and saves His elect inheritance. Sometimes our enemy is turned into a friend; sometimes he is despoiled of that special virulence of evil which was so threatening: sometimes he falls to pieces of himself: sometimes he does just so much as is beneficial, and then is removed. Commonly the Church has

¹ J. G. Snead-Cox, "Life of Cardinal Vaughan," Vol. I, pp. 64, 65.

nothing more to do than to go on in her own proper duties, in confidence and peace; to stand still and see the salvation of God.

‘Mansueti hereditabunt terram

Et delectabuntur in multitudine pacis.’”¹

XXXVII. 25.—*I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*

We may compare with these words a well-known passage from Epictetus: “Does any good man fear that food should fail him? It does not fail the blind; it does not fail the lame. Shall it fail the good man? Is God so negligent of His own institutions, of His servants, of His witnesses? . . . What, then, if God does not bestow food? What else than that like a good general, He hath made me a signal of retreat? I obey, I follow, speaking well of my leader, praising his works. For I came when it seemed good to Him, and again, when it seems good to Him, I depart; and in life it was my business to praise God within myself, and to every auditor, and to the world. Doth He grant me but few things? Doth He refuse me affluence? It is not His pleasure. He did not grant it to Hercules, His own son.”²

XXXVII. 29.—*The righteous shall inherit the land.*

Mr. S. H. Leeder writes:—

“The sheikh Al Azar [of the Moslem University at Cairo] was specially anxious that I should see the copy of the Psalms which is in the University Library, and is constantly read by students. He reminded me that the Psalms are mentioned twice in the Koran, once with a quotation—‘My servants, the righteous, shall inherit the earth’ (Sura xxi. 105)”.³

XXXVII. 38.—*Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right; for that shall bring a man peace at the last* (Prayer-Book Version).

Sir Walter Scott said in his last days in Italy: “I am drawing near to the close of my career; I am fast shuffling off the stage. I have been perhaps the most voluminous author of the

¹ Wilfrid Ward, “Life of Cardinal Newman,” Vol. II, p. 462.

² Quoted by Dean Church.

³ “Veiled Mysteries of Egypt,” p. 321.

day; and it is a comfort to me to think that I have tried to unsettle no man's faith, to corrupt no man's principle, and that I have written nothing which on my death-bed I should wish blotted."

xxxix. 2.—*I was dumb with silence; I held my peace, even from good.*

Charles Lamb says in his essay, "A Quakers' Meeting": "For a man to refrain even from good words, and to hold his peace, it is commendable; but for a multitude it is a great mastery".

xxxix. 3.—*While I was musing the fire burned.*

"I sometimes think," wrote Dr. Alexander McLaren, "that a verse in one of the Psalms carries the whole pith of homiletics—'While I was musing the fire burned, then spake I with my tongue'. Patient meditation, resulting in kindled emotion and the flashing up of truth with warmth and light, and then—and not till then—the rush of speech, 'moved by the Holy Ghost'—these are the processes which will make sermons live things with hands and feet, as Luther's words were said to be. 'Then spake I,' not 'Then sate I down at my desk and wrote it all down to be majestically read out of manuscript in a leather case'." ¹

"Towards the end of 1654," writes Madame Duclaux, "Pascal was more seriously ill than he had been for some years. On the night of St. Clement's Day, the 23rd of November, unable to sleep, he lay reading the Gospel of St. John. Suddenly his eyes dazzled; a flame of fire seemed to envelop him. In the incomparable phrase of the 'Imitation,' he was all on fire; 'totus ignitus'; and with the Psalmist he cried: 'In meditatione mea exardescet ignis,' a flame of mysterious, beneficent fire that undated heart and flesh and spirit with a new sense! Such a moment of marvellous euphoria could never be forgotten nor expressed with mortal words, only with tears, or in such broken fragmentary speech, like sobs, as Pascal found, to record the mystic moment in that Memorial which thenceforth he ever wore in secret, sewn into his clothes like a talisman." ²

¹ "Life of Dr. McLaren of Manchester," p. 72.

² "The French Ideal," p. 51.

PSALM XL.

XL. 1.—*I waited patiently for the Lord.*

“Expectans expectavi.” These words were inscribed on the pectoral cross presented to Bishop Montgomery, Bishop of Tasmania, at the Sydney Jubilee. Dr. Montgomery entered soon afterwards on his great work as Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

XL. 5.—*If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.*

When Dr. John McLeod Campbell was dying, he was heard slowly repeating to himself the first of the five hymns that are printed at the end of Scottish Bibles, beginning with the words:—

“When all Thy mercies, O my God !
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I’m lost
In wonder, love, and praise.”¹

XL. 5.—*Thy thoughts which are to us-ward.*

Sir Thomas Browne wrote:—

“And to be true, and speak my soul, when I survey the occurrences of my life, and call into account the finger of God, I can perceive nothing but an abyss and mass of mercies, either in general to mankind, or in particular to myself.”²

XL. 7.—*Lo, I come.*

“The Man Christ Jesus was, of all created beings—as far as we know their history—the only one who chose His own destiny, who foreknew and accepted its full conditions: who saw a great need and responded to it; ‘Lo, I come’. ‘My leave,’ said the acute Frenchwoman, ‘was not asked before I came into the world’—a saying in which all that the human heart can urge against God and His appointments lies hid. Why should I be called upon to endure, to forgo, so much? Had the choice been permitted me, I might possibly have declined it. *Our Saviour’s leave was asked.* His fulfilment of His Father’s will was voluntary; He saw the end from the beginning; *saw it even in the beginning*, and walked onwards to that end, seeing His own destiny and feeling His own freedom. ‘I have power,’

¹ “Memorials,” Vol. II, p. 334.

² “Religio Medici.”

He says, 'to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again.'"—DORA GREENWELL.¹

XLII. 1.—*Blessed is he that considereth the poor.*

Bishop Pavillon of Alet, the friend of Port-Royal, denied himself every luxury that he might give to the poor. When his share of his father's property came to him, and his near relations not only entertained, but expressed the hope that, using the income as he pleased, he would reserve the principal for the benefit of his family, he answered only by sending orders to Paris to dispose of the whole, and applying the proceeds, no less than 40,000 crowns, to the relief of his people in a year of famine. . . . His own clothes were in tatters from very age; and he denied himself even necessary books. His Bible was worn out with use; and when some friends remonstrated with him on the state of his breviary, which would hardly hold together, "It is true," he replied, "but a new breviary would be worth at least fourteen or fifteen livres, and in the meantime some poor man might perhaps want a blanket. I had rather that the poor man had the preference, and I still use my old breviary."²

Dr. Livingstone wrote in his Journal for 1866, while travelling in the interior of Africa:—

"We have to employ five or six carriers, and they rule the length of the day's march. Those from Chimuna's village growled at the cubit of calico with which we paid them, but a few beads pleased them perfectly, and we parted good friends. It is not likely I shall ever see them again, but I always like to please them, because it is right to consider their desires. Is not that what is meant in 'Blessed is he that considereth the poor'?"³

XLII. 1.—St. Teresa often repeated that verse, "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God".

XLII. 4.—*When I remember these things, I pour out my soul*

¹ "The Patience of Hope."

² C. Beard, "Port-Royal," Vol. II, p. 223.

³ "Last Journals," Vol. I, p. 140.

in me : for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God.

When Dr. J. M. Neale was dying, he wrote in a letter to the Sisters of St. Margaret's, East Grinstead :—

"You know that I have nothing to offer you in return but my poor prayers : and scarcely even those to-day, when I feel so very weak. You know not how often I think of that verse, Psalm XLII. 4 ('Now when I think thereupon, I pour out my heart by myself ; for I went with the multitude, and brought them forth into the house of God'). I knew well that after the operation yesterday, for which I cannot be thankful enough, to-day must be one of utter depression. Will you say one prayer that I may be comforted in this ?" ¹

XLII. 6.—*O my God, my soul is cast down within me ; therefore will I remember Thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.*

"Have you never (says Bunyan) a hill *Mizar* to remember ? Have you forgot the close, the milk-house, the stable, the barn, and the like, where God did visit your souls ? Remember also the word, the word, I say, upon which the Lord hath caused you to hope ; if you have sinned against light, if you are tempted to blaspheme, if you are drowned in despair, if you think God fights against you, or if heaven is hid from your eyes, remember it was thus with your father ; *but out of them all the Lord delivered me.*" ²

XLII. 8.—*In the night His song shall be with me.*

Gilbert White of Selborne wrote in 1773 :—

"Of the sedge-bird be pleased to say it sings most part of the night ; its notes are hurrying, but not unpleasing, and imitative of several birds ; as the sparrow, swallow, skylark. . . . Though it slumbers sometimes, yet as soon as it is awakened it reassumes its song."

PSALM XLIII.

XLIII.—After the death of John Hampden "his remains were conveyed to the churchyard of Great Hampden, close beside the old family mansion, where the patriot had spent so much of

¹ "Letters of John Mason Neale," p. 367.

² Preface to "Grace Abounding".

his life in the studies and the sports of a country gentleman. Through lanes under the beech-covered chalk hills of the Chilterns, a detachment of his favourite troops, bare-headed, carried him to his last resting-place—their arms reversed, their drums and ensigns muffled—mournfully chanting, as they slowly marched along, the dirge from the Book of Psalms, ‘Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.’ . . . When the funeral was over, the soldiers, returning from the village church to their quarters, made the green woods and the white hills that summer day resound to the beautiful prayer and the cheerful song, so appropriate to their present circumstances: ‘Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation. O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man. For Thou art the God of my strength: why dost Thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy; yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God, my God. Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance and my God.’”¹

XLIII. 1.—*Judge me, O God, and plead my cause.*

These words were inscribed on a banner on which was painted Darnley lying dead under a tree, and his infant kneeling by him, with the legend, “Judge and revenge my cause, O Lord,” coming out of his mouth. The banner was waved before Queen Mary at Carberry, and was hung before her window in the Provost’s house opposite the market cross of Edinburgh, where she was guarded as a captive before her removal to Lochleven.²

XLIII. 3.—*O send out Thy light and Thy truth.*

The people of Mansoul prayed:—

“Lord, let light go before, and let love come after: yea, take us by the hand, and lead us by Thy counsels, and let this always abide upon us, that all things shall be for the best for

¹ Dr. Stoughton, “History of Religion in England,” Vol. I, pp. 278, 279.

² D. Hay Fleming, “Mary Queen of Scots,” p. 164.

Thy servants ; and come to our Mansoul, and do as it pleaseth Thee. Or, Lord, come to our Mansoul, do what Thou wilt, so Thou keepest us from sinning, and makest us serviceable to Thy Majesty.”¹

XLIII. 4.—*God my exceeding joy.*

In the “ Life ” of Dr. Charteris we read (p. 389) :—

“ An Edinburgh lady in the extremity of doubt about the unknown God, the Divinity of Christ, and the efficacy of prayer, turned to him for sympathy and counsel because of a sermon she had never forgotten when he preached on ‘ God my exceeding joy,’ and was so guided and comforted by him that she said it was ‘ like a helping hand put out in the dark ’.”

XLIII. 5.—*Hope in God.*

Dr. James MacGregor wrote in his diary for September, 1876, when he was on his first visit to the Duke of Argyll at Inveraray :—

“ After lunch the Duke and Duchess drove Macleod and myself to the castle of Dunderawe. On the doorway is the inscription : ‘ Behauld the End of all. Be nocht wiser than the Hiest. Hope in God.’ ”

March 8, 1885, was the last Sunday on which Bishop Wordsworth of Lincoln was able to attend church. As he walked home he stopped two or three times to repeat the verses which occurred three times in the Psalms for that evening : “ *Why art thou so heavy, O my soul ? . . . put thy trust in God* ”.²

XLIV. 23.—*Awake, why sleepest Thou, O Lord.*

There is a Jewish tradition that in the Maccabee period, the Levites, ascending the pulpit in the synagogue, daily chanted this verse, but that John Hyrcanus, High Priest and King, 107 B.C., forbade the custom, saying, “ Doth God sleep ? Hath not the Scripture said, ‘ He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep ’ ? ”³

PSALM XLV.

XLV. 3, 4.—*Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty, and in thy majesty ride prosperously.*

¹ Bunyan’s “ Holy War ”.

² “ Psalm Mosaics,” p. 200.

³ *Ibid.* p. 204.

Donald Cargill, in preaching from this passage, said "that no sooner Christ became all in all to a soul, but the next wish of that soul is, 'O that He were thus to all the world!' And let none think that they are in a right exercise of true religion that want zeal for God's public glory. And in the afternoon [he preached] upon the words, 'What will you do in the day of visitation? whence will you flee for help? and where will you leave your glory?'"¹

XLV. 4.—*Ride on because of the word of truth, f.* (Prayer-Book Version).

"My resolution is taken," said George Borrow to Maria Diaz, after his visit to the Archbishop of Toledo. "I shall mount my horses, which are neighing in the stable, and betake myself to the villages and plains of dusty Spain. *Al campo, al campo.* 'Ride forth, because of the word of righteousness, and thy right hand shall show thee terrible things.' I will ride forth, Maria."²

Luther was at the Wartburg when he received the pages of Melancthon's "Loci Communes" which was published in the autumn of 1521. In writing to thank his young friend, he used the words: "Prospere procede et regna".³

XLV. 7.—*God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

"There are some days, even moments in our lives, upon which the burden of the whole seems laid, which, as in a parable, condense within them the mystery, the contradiction of our existence, and perhaps hint at its solution. After such times, life grows clearer before and after. These seasons are set apart from the rest by a solemn consecration. We feel that we are anointed 'above our fellows'; it may be for the joy of the bridal, for the wrestler's struggle, or against the day of our burial, we know not which."—DORA GREENWELL.⁴

XLV. 8.—*All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia.*

J. M. Neale quotes this passage from John Tauler:—

"'All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia.' What

¹ Patrick Walker, "Six Saints of the Covenant," Vol. II, p. 42.

² "The Bible in Spain," ch. XLII.

³ Enders, "Luthers Briefwechsel," Vol. III, p. 222.

⁴ "Two Friends."

then? Is it while the bride stands by alone that we know of the incense of her presence? Surely not. When she has gone past, still she leaves behind the perfume of the ivory palaces,—so that men shall say, This way she went, by this path she followed her Lord's path; by this track her feet trod the rough flints and sherds of this earth, that they might merit to walk upon the golden streets of New Jerusalem. Wherefore it is written: 'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.'¹

XLV. 9.—St. Basil explained the second part of this verse as follows:—

“‘On thy right hand did stand the queen in a vesture of gold, wrought about with divers colours.’ The Psalmist speaks here of the Church, of which we read in the Canticles, that ‘she alone is the spotless dove of Christ, who conducts to the right hand of Christ those known for their good works, separating them from the evil, as the shepherd his sheep from the goats. The queen then stands by, the soul united to the bridegroom, even the Word, not dominated by sin, but partaker of the kingdom of Christ’. And ‘let not the Church of God, which has received the garment without seam, woven from the top throughout, preserved unrent even by the soldiers, and which has put on Christ—let her not rend her robe’.”

XLV. 10.—*Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forsake also thine own people and thy father's house.*

These were the words which greeted Elizabeth of Valois, eldest daughter of Henry II of France and Catherine de' Medici, when she entered Spain as the bride of Philip II. The French, we are told, disliked the parading of these words at Guadalaxara, but through the private history of royal ladies of that age the words run like a mournful refrain: “Audi filia et vide”. The most unpromising personal alliances were sought and accepted on political grounds.

When J. H. Newman left Littlemore for Oscott at the invitation of Cardinal Wiseman, he wrote to Ambrose St. John: “‘Obliviscere populum tuum’ and ‘domum patris tui’ has

¹ “Sermons on Passages from the Prophets,” Vol. I, p. 97.

been in my ears for the last twelve hours". "I realise more and more that we are leaving Littlemore, and it is like going on the open sea."

XLV. 16.—*Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children* (with Ps. LXXXIV. 1).

The Abbess Angélique of Port-Royal, whose conscience led her to exclude her beloved father, M. Arnauld, from the inner chambers of the convent on the famous *Journée du Guichet*, had the joy of receiving her own mother as a daughter-nun. Sainte-Beuve, in his "History of Port-Royal," has described the holy and peaceful convent life of Madame Arnauld *mère*. She became a nun at the age of fifty-six. It was her custom to call her daughters Angélique and Agnes *ma Mère*, because they had both filled the office of Abbess. As she lay on her death-bed she was heard murmuring, "How amiable are Thy tabernacles". M. de Saint-Cyran described her as "a soul built upon the rock".

PSALM XLVI.

XLVI. 2.—*Though the earth be moved.*

John Wesley preached in Hyde Park on the occasion of the earthquake felt in London, 8 March, 1750, and repeated these words. Charles Wesley composed Hymn 67, in Wesley's collection, the following lines of which illustrate this verse :—

"How happy, then, are we,
Who build, O Lord, on Thee,
What can our foundation shock ?
Though the shattered earth remove,
Stands our city on a rock,
On the rock of heavenly love."¹

XLVI. 4.—*There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High* (with Rev. XXII. 1).

In canto xxx. of the "Paradise" Dante wrote :—

"And I saw light, in fashion of a river
Fulvid with effulgence, between two banks
Depicted with a marvellous spring.
Out of this river issued living sparks

¹ "Psalm Mosaics," p. 212.

And on every side settled in the flowers,
 Like unto rubies which gold circles round.
 Then, as if inebriate with the odours,
 They plunged again into the wondrous torrent
 And as one entered, another issued forth.”¹

The living sparks represent angels and the river represents the *lumen gratiae*, the light of grace.

XLVI. 10.—*Be still, and know that I am God.*

“This was the one point of advice which St. Bernard chose when pressed by his friend Eugenius, Bishop of Rome, to write something that would help him in his own spiritual life—‘*Vacare considerationi*’. It is indeed nothing more than the Psalmist had said long before: ‘Be still then, and know that I am God’.”²

XLVI. 11.—*The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.*

“I want to write,” said John Wesley, as he lay on his death-bed. A pen was put into his hand. “I cannot,” he exclaimed. “Let me write for you. Tell me what you wish to say,” said Miss Ritchie. “Nothing,” he replied, “but that God is with us. The best of all is, God is with us.” Lifting up his dying arm in token of victory, and raising his feeble voice he again repeated the heart-reviving words, “The best of all is, God is with us.” “Pray and praise,” again and again he repeated. “Farewell, farewell,” he uttered, as he shook hands with all around his dying bed. “The clouds drop fatness,” he went on to say, as he felt heavenly strength shed upon him, “as showers that water the earth.” After a pause came the watchwords, “The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge”. Scores of times he strove to say, “I’ll praise, I’ll praise”; but nature failed. “Farewell,” was the last word on his lips, as he passed away “in the presence of his brethren,” Wednesday, 2 March, 1791, between three and four months before the Countess of Huntingdon.³

XLVII.—In his description of the Slaughter-house of Cawn-pore, Sir George Trevelyan says: “The library of the captives

¹ Dr. Carroll’s translation.

² Bishop Edward King, “The Love and Wisdom of God,” p. 129.

³ From Dr. Stoughton’s description of Wesley’s end,
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was small indeed, but such books as they had were to the purpose. The earliest comers discovered among the vestiges of slaughter a treatise entitled 'Preparation for Death'; and a Bible which must have travelled in Major Vibart's barge down to Nuzzufgur and back to Cawnpore. . . . The list was closed by a Church Service, from which the cover had been stripped, and many pages at the end torn off. Unbound and incomplete, it had fulfilled its mission; for it opened of itself where, within a crumpled and crimson-sprinkled margin, might be read the concise and beautiful supplications of our Litany. It concluded, that mutilated copy, with the forty-seventh Psalm, wherein David thanks the Almighty for a victory and a saving mercy:—

“O clap your hands together, all ye people : O sing unto God with a voice of melody.

“He shall subdue the people under us : and the nations under our feet.

“God is gone up with a merry noise : and the Lord with the sound of a trump.

“God rejoiceth over the heathen : God sitteth on His holy seat.

“God, which is very high exalted, doth defend the earth, as it were with a shield.’

“Such were the printed lines which, from amidst the rent tresses, and shivered toys, and the scraps of muslin dyed in the most costly of all pigments, lay staring up to high heaven in tacit but impressive irony.”

XLVIII. 12, 13.—*Walk about Zion, and go round about her : tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following.*

Milton, in Book II of “Paradise Lost,” puts into the mouth of the lost angel Belial a strange commentary on these words:—

“The towers of heav’n are fill’d
With armed watch, that render all access
Impregnable ; oft on the bordering deep
Encamp their legions ; or, with obscure wing
Scout, far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise.”

XLVIII. 14.—*This God is our God for ever and ever.*

The martyred Bishop Hannington was consecrated to the office of a Bishop on St. John the Baptist's Day, 24 June, 1888, in the Parish Church of Lambeth. On that day two missionary Bishops were consecrated for foreign work, the other being the Hon. and Rev. A. J. K. Anson. Shortly before eleven o'clock the two Bishops-designate met the Archbishop together with the Bishops of London, St. Albans, Rochester, Lichfield, Dover, Ohio, and Saskatchewan, in the library of Lambeth Palace; thence they proceeded to the church. As the procession entered the sacred building the choir chanted the *Magnus Dominus*, Psalm XLVIII., the concluding words of which came to the new Bishops as a message from heaven—to Hannington almost as an omen—"This God is our God for ever and ever; He shall be our guide even unto death".¹

XLIX. 17.—*For he shall carry nothing away with him when he dieth.*

Archbishop Trench recalls an Eastern legend which illustrates these words of the Psalmist. Alexander the Great, we are there told, being upon his death-bed, commanded that when he was carried forth to the grave his hands should not be wrapped as was usual in the cere-cloths, but should be left outside the bier, so that all might see them, and might see that they were empty, and there was nothing in them; that he, born to one Empire, and the conqueror of another, the possessor while he lived of two worlds—of the East and of the West—and of the treasures of both, yet now when he was dead, could retain no smallest portion of these treasures; that in this matter the poorest beggar and he were at length upon equal terms.²

L. 3.—*Our God shall come* (Vulgate, "*Deus manifeste veniet*").

One of the most noted princes of the sixteenth century, Maurice of Saxony, died with these words upon his lips. He was mortally wounded at the battle of Sievershausen on 9 July, 1553, when contending against the forces of Margrave Albrecht.

¹ "Life of Bishop Hannington," p. 298.

² "Psalm Mosaics," p. 220.

The hero of the day, says Friedrich von Bezold, was the Elector Maurice; and his Saxon nobility, the Brunswickers under the leadership of their three Dukes, and the Hessian cavalry, vied with him in his desperate bravery. But the victory, which he won towards evening after a few hours' fighting, was dearly bought. The "old lion" of Brunswick had lost his two sons, Charles Victor and Philip Magnus; the youthful Frederick of Lüneburg, standard-bearer of the Electoral banner, had fallen; and sadder than all, his reckless chivalry had cost the life of Maurice. At first he hoped for recovery and occupied himself with the messages announcing the victory, but the captured flags, more than sixty in number, which were brought to his tent, were lowered in presence of a dying man. After two days of painful struggle the prince died on 11 July, at the age of thirty-two. He was fully conscious to the last, remembered his wife and daughter, and showed a perfect Christian resignation. His last words, after he had heartily forgiven his enemies, were these, 'God shall come'. Maurice was deeply mourned by the German people.¹

PSALM LI.

LI.—The literature belonging to this Psalm might be expanded into a volume. As Robertson of Brighton truly said, "it describes the vicissitudes of spiritual life in an Englishman as well as in a Jew". Anthologists of Psalter-history have set forth many great names which are associated with the *Miserere*. We think of Godfrey de Bouillon and his Crusaders, who heard the Psalm chanted in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as they rode into Jerusalem. St. Margaret of Scotland repeated it on her death-bed, as she waited for tidings of her husband and sons. For records of its preciousness to Christians in past ages—to Chevalier Bayard, Lady Jane Grey, Sir Thomas More, Count Egmont, the martyrs Rogers and Rowland Taylor, the Reformer Œcolampadius, and many more—we must refer readers to such collections as those of Dr. Prothero and Mr. Saunders Dyer, adding only a few passages of our own gathering.

¹ "Geschichte der deutschen Reformation," p. 861.

THE WHOLE PSALM.

The use of the Psalm in Italy during a visitation of plague is described by Bulwer Lytton in "Rienzi".

Adrian Colonna, entering the plague-stricken Florence, comes at length before a stately church. "Its doors were wide open, and he saw within a company of monks (the church had no other worshippers, and they were masked) gathered round the altar, and chanting the *Miserere Domine*;—the ministers of God, in a city hitherto boasting the devoutest population in Italy, without a flock !

"The young Cavalier paused before the door, and waited till the service was done, and the monks descended the steps into the street.

" 'Holy fathers,' said he then, ' may I pray your goodness to tell me my nearest way to the convent Santa Maria de' Pazzi ? ' "

" 'Son,' said one of these featureless spectres, for so they seemed in their shroud-like robes and uncouth vizards—' Son, pass on your way, and God be with you. Robbers or revellers may now fill the holy cloisters you speak of. The abbess is dead ; and many a sister sleeps with her. And the nuns have fled from the contagion.' "

"Adrian half fell from his horse, and as he still remained rooted to the spot, the dark procession swept on, hymning in solemn dirge through the desolate street the monastic chant :—

' By the mother and the Son,
Death endured and mercy won ;
Spare us, sinners though we be ;
Miserere Domine ! ' "

R. L. Stevenson as a young and gay traveller heard the *Miserere* sung in Noyon Cathedral. He gave his impressions as follows : " One other circumstance distressed me. I could bear a *Miserere* myself, having had a good deal of open-air exercise of late ; but I wished the old people somewhere else. It was neither the right sort of music nor the right sort of divinity for men and women who have come through most accidents by this time, and probably have an opinion of their own upon the tragic element in life. A person up in years can generally do his own

Miserere for himself ; although I notice that such an one often prefers *Jubilate Deo* for his ordinary singing. On the whole, the most religious exercise for the aged is probably to recall their own experience ; so many friends dead, so many hopes disappointed, so many slips and stumbles, and withal so many bright days and smiling providences ; there is surely the matter of a very eloquent sermon in all this.”¹

Archbishop Temple’s venerable mother lived with him during his headmastership of Rugby School. In the evening, before prayer-time, she retired to her room. “Her grand-daughter, who slept in an adjoining room, would hear Dr. Temple come up to his mother’s room, and read by her bedside the fifty-first Psalm, the collect for the twenty-first Sunday after Trinity, and the Lord’s Prayer, and then, without more words, leave her to her rest.”²

LI. 7.—*Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean.*

Dante heard the words *Asperges me* sung sweetly as he drew near to the blessed shore on the other side of the water of Lethe.

LI. 7.—*Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.*

Canon Hudson writes in his reminiscences of Archbishop Maclagan’s Cambridge days :—

“One little thing dwells especially in my memory of him as regards my visits to him in his rooms in undergraduate days in Trumpington Street. When I went at any time into his inner chamber to wash my hands, I always saw over his washstand the words, ‘*Amplius lava me,*’ and I have often thought of it, and said to myself, surely never did anyone more enjoy the everlasting benediction of the heavenly washing than he !”³

LI. 13.—*Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways.*

“Some one complained to Mr. Cargill ‘that he preached and prayed short’ ; who said, ‘O sir, ’tis long betwixt meals, and we are in a starving condition. All is good, sweet, and wholesome which ye deliver ; but why do ye straiten us so much for shortness ?’ He said : ‘Ever since I bowed a knee in good earnest to pray, I never durst pray and preach with my gifts ; and where my heart is not affected and comes not up with my mouth, I

¹ “An Inland Voyage.”

² “Memoirs of Archbishop Temple,” Vol. I, p. 232.

³ F. D. How, “Life of Archbishop Maclagan, p. 28.

always thought it time for me to quit it. What comes not from my heart, I have little hope that it will go to the heart of others'; then repeated these sentences of the fifty-first Psalm, 'Then will I teach transgressors Thy way, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee'. When was this then? Just when he had the experience of the foregoing things." ¹

LI. 15.—*O Lord, open Thou my lips.*

As Dante, in the "Purgatorio," follows his guides along the Terrace of Gluttony, a mournful song strikes on his ears: "Labia mea, Domine" rousing joy and grief.

LI. 17.—*A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.*

St. Teresa quoted these words in her last moments. Father Antony asked her if she would not be buried in her own convent at Avila, to which she answered, "Have I anything mine in this world? or will they not afford me here a little earth?" She recited often certain verses of the *Miserere* Psalm, especially these words, "A contrite and humble heart, O Lord, Thou wilt not despise". This she repeated till her speech failed her. After this she remained fourteen hours as it were in a trance, holding a crucifix fast in her hand, and calmly expired at nine o'clock in the evening, on 4 October, 1582.²

In Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" we read that when the boy martyr William Hunter was going to the place of execution, he "took a wet broom fagot, and kneeled down, and read the fifty-first Psalm, till he came to these words, 'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise'".

When the fire was made "William flung his Psalter into his brother's hand, who said, 'William, think on the holy passion of Christ, and be not afraid of death'. And William answered, 'I am not afraid'. Then he lifted up his hands to heaven and said, 'Lord, Lord, Lord, receive my spirit,' and casting down his head again into the smoke, he yielded up his life for the truth, sealing it with his blood to the praise of God."

LI. 18.—*Build thou the walls of Jerusalem.*

¹ Patrick Walker, "Six Saints of the Covenant," Vol. II, p. 38.

² Alban Butler's "Lives of the Saints".

“The destruction of Zion,” says Mr. C. F. Abbott, “cast its shadow over the soul of the Jewish people throughout the Middle Ages. . . . In the synagogues, as well as in many private houses, a space on the wall was always left unpainted to recall the national humiliation. The Jews of every country in token of grief wore black, whence they were called ‘Mourners of Zion’. In memory of the same calamity gold and silver ornaments were banished from the bridal wreath, and ashes were strewn over the heads of the bride and the bridegroom at weddings. In Germany the bridegroom wore a cowl of mourning and the bride a white shroud. A mediaeval table hymn, sung after the meal on Friday evenings or Saturday mornings, ran as follows :—

‘ Build, O rebuild Thou Thy temple,
Fill again Zion, Thy city.
Clad with delight will we go there,
Other and new songs to sing there,
Merciful One and All-Holy,
Praised for ever and ever.’ ”¹

PSALM LV.

LV. 6.—*And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove ! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.*

Rückert’s prayer was “O for wings, for wings !”

Charlotte Brontë wrote, after receiving a letter in which Mary Taylor described the pictures and cathedrals of Brussels :—

“I hardly know what swelled my breast as I read her letter : such a vehement impatience of restraint and steady work ; such a strong wish for wings—wings such as wealth can furnish ; such an urgent desire to see, to know, to learn ; something internal seemed to expand bodily for a minute. I was tantalized by the consciousness of faculties unexercised.”

St. Francis Borgia preached the funeral sermon of the Emperor Charles V, in the presence of the Regent and her court, in the church of the royal Benedictines at Valladolid. He chose as his text, “Ecce elongavi fugiens ; et mansi in solitudine”. The sermon was filled with praise of the Emperor for his pious magnanimity in taking leave of the world before the world had taken leave of him. Amongst other reminiscences of

¹ “Israel in Europe,” p. 485.

his friend, Borgia told his hearers that he had it from the lips of the deceased that never, since he was one-and-twenty years of age, had he failed to set apart some portion of each day for inward prayer.¹

Cromwell wrote to Fleetwood in 1653: "I am in my temptation ready to say, 'Oh that I had wings like a dove, then would I flee away and be at rest,' but this I fear is my 'haste'. I bless the Lord I have somewhat keeps me alive, some sparks of the light of His countenance; and some sincerity above man's judgment."

LV. 6 (with CXIX. 9).—In describing the organ music of his "good Catholic friend, *Nov*—," Charles Lamb remarks:—

"When my friend commences upon one of those solemn anthems, which peradventure struck upon my heedless ear, rambling in the side aisles of the dim Abbey, some five-and-thirty years since, waking a new sense, and putting a soul of old religion into my young apprehension—(whether it be *that*, in which the Psalmist, weary of the persecutions of bad men, wisheth to himself dove's wings—or *that other*, which, with a like measure of sobriety and pathos, inquireth by what means the young man shall best cleanse his mind)—a holy calm pervadeth me—I am for the time

—rapt above earth

And possess joys not promised at my birth."

Phillips Brooks said on his death-bed to a friend: "I came near doing a dreadful thing the other day. I was in East Boston, and I suddenly felt as if I must get away from everything for a little while, and I went to the Cunard dock and asked if the steamer had sailed. She had been gone about an hour. I believe if she had still been there I should have absconded."²

Melanchthon wrote more than once in middle life, when pressed with overwork at Wittenberg: "I often think of flight".

De Quincey thus apostrophized his wife, Margaret Simpson, in "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater".

"These troubles are past, and thou wilt read these records of a period so dolorous to us both as the legend of some hideous

¹ "W. Stirling-Maxwell, "The Cloister Life of the Emperor Charles V".

² "Life of Phillips Brooks," Vol. II, p. 938.

dream that can return no more. Meantime I am again in London, and again I pace the terraces of Oxford Street by night; and oftentimes—when I am oppressed by anxieties that demand all my philosophy and the comfort of thy presence to support, and yet remember that I am separated from thee by three hundred miles and the length of three dreary months—I look up the streets that run northward from Oxford Street, upon moonlight nights, and recollect my youthful ejaculation of anguish; but then, remembering that thou art sitting alone in that same valley, and mistress of that very house to which my heart turned in its blindness nineteen years ago, I think that, though blind indeed, and scattered to the winds of late, the promptings of my heart may yet have had reference to a remoter time, and may be justified if read in another meaning; and, if I could allow myself to descend again to the impotent wishes of childhood, I should again say to myself, as I look to the north, ‘Oh that I had the wings of a dove!’ and with how just a confidence in thy good and gracious nature might I add the other half of my early ejaculation—‘and *that* way I would fly for comfort!’”

LV. 14.—*We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.*

Pym, in Browning’s “Strafford” says of his former friend Wentworth:—

“Too true! Never more, never more
Walked we together! most alone I went.
I have had friends—all here are fast my friends—
But I shall never quite forget that friend.
And yet it could not but be real in him!”

LV. 22.—*Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.*

John Hill Burton in his “History of Scotland” describes the controversy between St. Kentigern (or St. Mungo) and the heathen king Morken. The saint applied to the king for temporalities for the becoming support of himself and his priestly followers. “Morken’s answer did credit to his power of sarcastic retort, whatever may be said for its seemliness. ‘Was it not a pet precept of the saint, “Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He

will care for thee"? Now,' continued the king, 'here am I, who have no faith in such precepts, who do not seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness; yet, for all that, are not riches and honours heaped upon me?' What would the saint have?—practice proved his doctrine to be naught. In vain the saint pleaded that it was part of the inscrutable policy of the Almighty to afflict good and holy people with the wants of the flesh, and heap the world's wealth on the ungodly—it was to both a trial, giving an opportunity for acts of beneficence and self-sacrifice. The prince would by no means see the logic of this, and told the saint to have done with words and come to deeds. There were the royal granaries full of produce, and there were the Christian priests starving. There would be something to believe in if the God in whom they trusted would bodily transfer these good things into their hands. The saint retired into his oratory and prayed. In the intensity of his sufferings he began to weep, and then, behold, as the tears filled and flowed from his eyes, so began the waters of the Clyde to swell into a mighty flood. It overflowed the banks where the royal granaries were, and, carrying them down the stream, deposited the whole at the saint's very door, beside the Mellingdevor or the Molindinar stream, which flows through Glasgow to join the Clyde."

LVIII. 5.—*The voice of the charmer.*

"A snake-charmer," says Al Ghazzali, "will abstain from touching snakes in the presence of his young child, because he knows that the child, believing himself as clever as his father, will not fail to imitate him; and in order to lend more weight to his prohibition the charmer will not touch a serpent under the eyes of his son."¹

LX. 9.—*Who will bring me into the strong city?*

Sainte-Beuve in describing the conversion of Mère Angélique of Port-Royal says: "He who believes in grace and in that *strong fortress* of salvation here below cannot be surprised if he sees people forcing their way in by all manner of means;

¹ "Confessions of Al Ghazzali" (translated by Claud Field), p. 39.

some creeping with their faces on the ground, others through the air-hole whose grating wounds them as they press in, or by the sewer which soils only the garment, or by the opening to which they have climbed in the roof—a comic sight perhaps from outside, yet thus was the palsied man let down". [Cf. St. Luke v. 19.]¹

LX. 11.—*Vain is the help of man.*

Defoe writes in the "Journal of the Plague Year" :—

"In that very moment, when we might very well say—'Vain was the help of man,' I say, in that very moment, it pleased God, with a most agreeable surprise, to cause the fury of it to abate, even of itself, and the malignity declining, as I have said, though infinite numbers were sick, yet fewer died; and the very first week's bill decreased one thousand eight hundred and forty-three—a vast number indeed!"

LXI. 2.—Principal G. A. Smith says :—

"When a man is called to the unshareable duty of a great decision, or called to the quest for truth, or given the charge of other lives, or lifted above his fellows in authority or vision, there springs in him a yearning to cling to, and nestle in, and be shadowed by, something bigger than himself. It is perhaps a king who says in Psalm LXI : 'When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the Rock higher than I'."²

LXII. 1.—Father Adderley, in his memorial tribute to Canon Bromby, vicar of All Saints', Clifton, says :—

"'My soul waiteth still,' that is, hushed,—'upon God' was ever his favourite text."³

LXIII. 1.—*Early will I seek Thee.*

"O see, the Weary liddes of wakefull Hope
(Love's Eastern windowes) All wide ope
With Curtains drawn
To catch the Day-break of Thy Dawn.
O dawn, at last, long look't for Day!
Take thine own wings and come away."

—RICHARD CRASHAW.

¹ "Port-Royal," Vol. I, p. 97.

² "Expositor," January, 1912.

³ "Church Times," 29 December, 1911.

“Dr. Pusey often recommended the study of Hebrew, especially for its devotional uses. It expresses so much more in fewer words than any other language, and he was fond of quoting as an instance of this the opening words of Psalm LXIII., ‘O God, Thou art my God: early will I seek Thee’—eleven words, which in Hebrew are expressed, with even fuller meaning, in *three* words. On one occasion he was lecturing on this Psalm, and in commenting on the words, ‘Thy loving-kindness is better than the life itself,’ he was overcome with emotion and, bursting into tears, was unable to continue his lecture.”¹

Bishop G. H. Wilkinson wrote to a friend: “It seems to me that if one could only for a single day realize in one’s heart the Redeemer’s agony, if these blessed Passion Week services would only by God’s Spirit bring home to one the events which every day we read, and on which we discourse in such glowing language—I don’t know whether what I write conveys any meaning to you, but to my mind Passion Week seems to bring back to one the spirit of the old Psalmist, ‘O God, my soul longeth for Thee in a barren and dry land where no water is’. With everything which man could desire, a happy home, a wife who can fully sympathize with me, a consciousness that God does love me and is training me for heaven, I do long for something which I cannot express. ‘Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus.’”²

LXIII. 3.—*Because Thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee.*

Emerson wrote of his young wife, who died of consumption: “Her end was blessed and a fit termination to such a career. She prayed that God would speedily release her from her body, and that she might not make this prayer to be rid of her pains, ‘but because Thy favour is better than life’. ‘Take me, O God, to Thyself,’ was frequently on her lips. Never anyone spoke with greater simplicity or cheerfulness of dying.”

LXV.—“St. Bernard said to a friend and pupil: ‘Trust to me who has had experience. You will find something far greater in the woods than you will in books. Stones and trees will teach you that which you can never learn from masters. Think you

¹ G. W. E. Russell, “Dr Pusey,” p. 195.

² “Memoir of Bishop G. H. Wilkinson,” Vol. I, p. 67.

not you can suck honey from the rock and oil from the flinty rock? Do not the mountains drop sweetness, the hills run with milk and honey, and the valleys stand thick with corn?' (verse 13).

"He was accustomed to say that whatever knowledge he had of the Scriptures, he had acquired chiefly in the woods and fields, and that beeches and oaks had even been his best teachers in the word of God."¹

LXVI. 8-20.—On 13 August, 1856, Ruskin wrote from Sallanches: "How little I thought God would bring me here again just now; and I am here, stronger in health, higher in hope, deeper in peace, than I have been for years. The green pastures and pine forests of the Varens softly seen through the light of my window. I cannot be thankful enough, nor happy enough. Psalm LXVI. 8-20."²

PSALM LXVIII.

LXVIII. 9.—*A gracious rain.*

Mother Emmanuel, sister of Lord Russell of Killowen, says of her father: "One little lesson of his often served me since. I was standing at the parlour window, watching the rain pouring down the panes, and I said, 'Such a horrible day!' and dear father, who overheard me, said, 'Oh, child, don't say that. You don't know but some poor farmer has been praying for that rain, and God has sent it to him.'"³

Dean Burgon, in his memoir of his brother-in-law, Charles Longuet Higgins, says that this good layman always opened his eyes with a "Benedicite omnia opera". "Sincerely did he praise and admire the weather even when it crossed some cherished plan of his own. I recall a certain occasion, when—his hay having already suffered grievously—a Sunday supervened which, without being warm was yet dry, so that if Monday had but been fine, what remained of the damaged crop might at least have been carried. Monday brought a leaden sky (a pall of cloud) and a steady downpour. Charles on entering the library

¹ J. Cotter Morison, "Life and Times of St. Bernard," pp. 20, 22.

² E. T. Cook, "The Life of Ruskin," Vol. I, p. 333.

³ "The Three Sisters of Lord Russell of Killowen," p. 184.

calmly surveyed the scene which met his gaze (for the large window immediately fronted him) in silence. I felt mischievous. 'Well, dear fellow, and how about the weather this morning?' . . . Still fastening his eyes on the dreary scene, he said with slow, earnest emphasis, '*A very gracious rain*'. A little nod followed, which of course settled the question."¹

LXVIII. 11.—*The Lord giveth the word; the women that publish the tidings are a great host* (R.V.).

The Women's Guild Hymn of the Church of Scotland, beginning with the line, "By the hopes we deeply cherish," was written by Dr. A. H. Charteris from this text. The words were set to music by the late A. L. Peace, Mus. Doc., to the tune called "Phoebe".²

LXVIII. 13.—*The wings of a dove covered with silver, f.*

We find a reference to this text in the Preface to the "*Traité de l'Amour de Dieu*," by St. Francis de Sales, where the saint enlarges on the beauty of the dove's wings.

LXVIII. 17.—*The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels.*

The Koran says: "Only the Lord knoweth the number of His armies".³

LXVIII. 17.—*Thousands of angels.*

Into the mouth of the lost Spirit Beelzebub, Milton puts these words:—

"What strength, what art, can then
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict sentries and stations thick
Of angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection, and we now no less
Choice in our suffrage; for, on whom we send,
The weight of all, and our last hope, relies."⁴

LXVIII. 18.—*Thou hast led captivity captive.*

"You cannot think (writes Bunyan in "*The Holy War*") what a shout there was in Immanuel's camp when they saw the

¹ "Twelve Good Men," Vol. II, p. 415.

² "Life of Dr. Charteris," p. 369.

³ "Confessions of Al Ghazzali" (translated by Claud Field), p. 50.

⁴ "Paradise Lost," Book II.

tyrant bound by the hand of their noble Prince, and tied to his chariot wheels! And they said, 'He hath led captivity captive, he hath spoiled principalities and powers. Diabolus is subjected to the power of his sword, and made the object of all derision.' Those also that rode reformades, and that came down to see the battle, they shouted with that greatness of voice, and sung with such melodious notes, that they caused them that dwell in the highest orbs to open their windows, put out their heads, and look down to see the cause of that glory.

"The townsmen, also, so many of them as saw this sight, were, as it were, while they looked, betwixt the earth and the heavens. True, they could not tell what would be the issue of things as to them; but all things were done in such excellent methods, and I cannot tell how, but things in the management of them seemed to cast a smile towards the town, so that their eyes, their heads, their hearts, and their minds, and all that they had, were taken and held while they observed Immanuel's order."

LXVIII. 18.—*Thou hast received gifts for men.*

This verse brought comfort to Bunyan in the worst of his mental agony as related in "Grace Abounding":—

"Yet that saying would sometimes come into my mind, *He hath received gifts for the rebellious*. The *rebellious*, thought I! Why, surely they are such as once were under subjection to their Prince; even those who after they have sworn obedience to His government have taken up arms against Him; and this, thought I, is my very condition. I once loved Him, feared Him, served Him; but now I am a rebel; I have sold Him. I have said, *Let Him go, if He will*; but yet He has gifts for rebels; and then, why not for me?"

LXVIII. 20.—*Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death.*

The text of Dr. John Donne's last sermon (see Izaak Walton's "Lives").

LXVIII. 28.—*Strengthen, O Lord, that which Thou hast wrought for us.*

Henri Perreyve quoted this text when writing to tell his friend Charles Perraud of a remarkable recovery of strength which had come to him in answer to prayer [31 July, 1851]:—

"We must wait, in humility, for the assurances of the future, repeating with love and self-surrender, 'Et nunc, Domine,

confirma hoc quod operatus es in nobis'. It would be vexatious to report to others as a miracle something which was only a natural result and perhaps an illusion. For us, what does it matter? Would our faith be less keen if we had been mistaken? And because God had not wrought a miracle for us, should we believe any the less that He is able to do so? Far from us are such foolish thoughts. We are the poorest and the weakest of children, under the rule of the most tender and most powerful of Fathers. Everything for us is mercy—the refusals as well as the graces given; and I must have blessed His arm if, instead of life, He had sent me the gift of death.”¹

LXIX. 9.—*The zeal of thine house.*

William Wilberforce wrote to his son Samuel in 1821:—

“I begin to hope it may please God to spare me to see my dear Samuel a minister of Christ, and I think scarcely anything on this side of the grave would gratify me more than to witness him going through the various duties of the ministerial office with ability and zeal. I place zeal at the top, you see. . . . There are so many clergymen who are no better than tradesmen, whether you regard the motives from which they enter the Church or discharge its office, that their sacred function sinks in the scale below that of the lawyer, for instance. But let a true minister of Christ meditate fairly on the subject, and fix on his mind a just sense of the real importance of the ministerial office, and all others fall below it as much as that of a coach-maker, who constructs a vehicle to take you to Bath, below that of an architect, who builds a mansion for permanent habitation or a temple for the worship of God.”

LXX. 5.—*But I am poor and needy; make haste unto me, O God.*

At the age of twenty-three Cardinal Vaughan wrote in his diary:—

“Let my career be where Thou pleasest, only let it be *intense*. I cannot well live without Thee, and without working for Thee, and I must work *intensely*. Intensity Thou hast put

¹ “Lettres de Henri Perreyve à un ami d'enfance,” pp. 130, 131.

into my nature, and hitherto Thou hast laid Thy weights upon it and stayed it within very narrow limits. But I still am young and unfit for the fulfilment of my aspirations. Thou alone canst fill my insufficiency; Thou canst make Thy servant good for anything. I am poor and needy—‘Ego pauper et egenus sum, Deus adjuva me.’”

LXXI. 1, 2.—*In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.*

Bishop Edward King's last letter was written to Canon Porter on 25 February, 1910. In it he said: “I hear you are like me, wondering and waiting if we are to be called. I would come and see you, but I am too ill. May God support our faith. ‘In Thee have I put my trust; deliver me in Thy righteousness.’ This is the only sure ground of peace.”¹

LXXI. 3.—“I hope,” wrote Erskine of Linlathen, “that dear M. has found God a ‘réfuge très aisé à trouver,’ as the French happily translate ‘a habitation whereunto I may always resort’.”

LXXI. 9.—*Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth me* (with verse 18.—*Now also when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not*).

Melanchthon wrote on 11 September, 1559 (seven months before his death), a letter of consolation to John Dolscius, pastor at Reichenbach, and in it he paid a tribute to his own wife, who had died two years earlier. He said: “Reverend sir and dearest brother, the longing for a lost wife does not die out in old men as it does in the young, who can fall in love a second time. As I look every day at my grandchildren, I think sorrowfully of Grandmother. My grief revives as I see how I myself and my family and grandchildren are bereft. For my wife bore the burden of the whole household, she nursed the babies, cured the sick, lightened my sorrows by prayers, taught the ignorant little ones to pray. Therefore I need her now in many things. I think your case must be the same, and I know not what consolation to suggest to you, save this, that we must resign ourselves to the will of God . . . and bear our present sorrows in

¹ G. W. E. Russell, “Edward King,” p. 303.

the hope of eternal joy. When we behold these troubles, let us think that it could not be possible that the whole human race should have been created merely for the miseries of this life. Soon we shall behold our wives and parents and children once more in the eternal Church, and with joy we shall draw the wisdom of God from its very spring. I think that Abraham and Jacob, when they lost their wives, must often have dwelt on such consolations, and must have repeated to themselves the Divine promises and testimonies. Do you therefore console yourself with the thought that this is the will of God which you must patiently accept, and with the hope of a new companionship in the heavenly Church. These remedies are suitable for the old. So I leave out all commonplace phrases of consolation, and with you I pray that the eternal God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may protect and govern us old men and the Church in its old age, and our families therein. I remember that my wife repeated almost daily the words of the Psalm: 'Non deficiat in senecta virtus mea'. Let us also diligently repeat this prayer both for ourselves and for the Church."¹

PSALM LXXII.

LXXII. 3.—*The mountains shall bring peace to the people.*

"I have heard that text, 'The mountains shall bring *peace*' so explained: a peace resting on sure reliability. One *reads* that in anything greatly prized—something that will bear all we hang upon it, something that will endure unto the end. It is *that*, endurance, steadfastness, which alone makes life great. One feels this in middle life, and what I think is the saddest part of it, is what Schiller expresses when he says 'the strong hours conquer us'—a sort of inward falling away from the generous hopes, aspirations, and resistances of earlier days—so that I feel I understand what St. John meant when he said, 'I write unto you, young men, *because ye are strong*'."—DORA GREENWELL.

LXXII. 6. Mown grass.—Cardinal Newman, in a letter to Henry Wilberforce, describes some early memories of his childhood's home at Ham, where he lived up to the age of six. "The

¹ "Corp. Ref.," Vol. IX, col. 914.

mower's scythe," he says, "cutting the lawn, used to sound so sweetly as I lay in a crib—in a front room at top."¹

LXXII. 7.—*Abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.*

Mr. John Buchan gives the following passage from the "Lives of the Saints" as the motto of his collection of tales and fancies entitled "The Moon Endureth":—

"St. Francis, preaching upon Psalm LXXII, 'Deus, judicium,' thus expounded the words, 'Orietur in diebus ejus justitia et abundantia pacis donec auferatur luna': The moon, he said, signified the dominion of all strange things in earth and air, such as were beyond the comprehension of man's narrow reason or the authority of his temporal will. To the righteous is promised abundance of peace while the moon endureth; that is, peace not from wars and oppressions alone, but likewise from the mysteries which God yet suffereth to cloud this world."

LXXII. 20.—*The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.*

"How striking," said Erskine of Linlathen, "are those words at the end of the seventy-second Psalm, even though they don't specially relate to it—'The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended'. He had nothing more or greater to ask for than the petitions of the seventy-second Psalm."

LXXIII. 4.—*There are no bands in their death.*

Sir Walter Scott, in the last chapter of "Kenilworth," quotes this verse in describing the suicide of the chief villain, Richard Varney:—

"'I was not born,' said Varney, 'to drag on the remainder of life a degraded outcast,—nor will I so die, that my fate shall make a holiday to the vulgar herd.'"

"From these words it was apprehended he had some design upon himself, and he was carefully deprived of all means by which such could be carried into execution. But like some of the heroes of antiquity, he carried about his person a small quantity of strong poison, prepared probably by the celebrated Demetrius Alasco. Having swallowed this potion over-night, he was found next morning dead in his cell; nor did he appear

¹ Wilfrid Ward, "Life of Cardinal Newman," Vol. II, p. 339.

to have suffered much agony, his countenance presenting, even in death, the habitual expression of sneering sarcasm, which was predominant while he lived. 'The wicked man,' saith Scripture, 'hath no bonds in his death.'"

LXXIII. 12.—*Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches* (with Ps. xvii. 14.—*Men of the world, which have their portion in this life; . . . they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes*).

The mood of these Psalmists is reflected in Charles Lamb's remarks in "Popular Fallacies," under the title "That Ill-Gotten Gain Never Prospers":—

"The rogues of this world—the pruder part of them at least,—know better," he says. "They have pretty sharp distinctions of the fluctuating and the permanent. 'Lightly come, lightly go,' is a proverb which they can very well afford to leave, when they leave little else, to the losers. They do not always find manors, got by rapine or chicanery, insensibly to melt away as the poets will have it; or that all gold glides, like thawing snow, from the thief's hand that grasps it. Church land, alienated to lay uses, was formerly denounced to have this slippery quality. But some portions of it somehow always stuck so fast that the denunciations have been fain to postpone the prophecy of refundment to a late posterity."

LXXIII. 16, 17.—*When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me. Until I went into the sanctuary of God.*

In "The Fair Maid of Perth," Sir Walter Scott describes a service at the Dominican Church, which was attended, under circumstances of grave anxiety, by Simon Glover and his daughter. Simon "knelt down with the air of a man who has something burdensome on his mind; but when the service ended he seemed free from anxiety, as one who had referred himself and his troubles to the disposal of Heaven".

LXXIII. 17.—*Until I went into the sanctuary of God.*

Phillips Brooks wrote in his diary: "After all, it is the deepest and not the superficial interest of life in which men sympathize most and come together; in religion above all other things, and as regards religion in those things which are deepest, not in forms and ordinations but in the sense of sin, the sense

of God, the hope of perfectness. I was struck with it as I travelled in Norway, where those whom I had not understood, who had lived a different life all the week, seemed as I saw them in church on Sunday to be so perfectly intelligible. The value of Sunday as thus the *common* day, the day of worship."

"Out of these reflections," says the biographer of Bishop Brooks, "was born a sermon on the text, 'Until I went into the sanctuary of God'. He wrote down the leading ideas of the sermon in the notebook, following the extracts just given.

"The Sanctuary of God the place of solved problems. The Holy Place of God. His Presence. The contact of the soul with His soul. How it shames our ordinary talk about church-going. How it convicts most of our preaching. How it shows the unimpaired fitness of the custom. The solution comes with the thought of God, and of the soul and of eternity and of redemption. I think one cannot go into any temple which men have built to worship God in, in however false a way, cannot enter a mosque or the most superstitious of cathedrals in a right spirit, without seeming to feel the influence of some such spiritual illumination on the problems that he has left outside in the hot street."

Miss Tippet, the elderly lodging-house keeper in "Miriam's Schooling," was a regular worshipper at her parish church, a "twicer" of whom Mr. Gladstone would have approved. The church was the only mental or spiritual education which Miss Tippet received. "Books she never read—she had not time; and if she tried to read one she was instantly seized with a curious fidgetiness—directly she sat down with a volume in her hand it was just as if things went all awry, and compelled her instantly to rise and adjust them. In church all this fidgetiness vanished, and no household cares intruded. It was strange, considering her temper, and how people generally carry their secular world with them wherever they go, but so it was. There was a secret in her history, her friends said, for though they knew nothing of her little bit of private religion, and although she never admitted a soul into the little oratory where the image of her Saviour hung, everybody was aware that there was 'a something about her' which took her out of the class to which she externally and by much of her ordinary conduct appeared to

belong, and of course the theory was an early love disappointment, the only theory which the average human intellect is capable of forming in such cases. It was utterly baseless; and Miss Tippit was touched with this faint touch of supernal grace just because her Maker had so decreed.”¹

LXXIV. 17.—*Thou hast made summer and winter.*

Brother Lawrence thanked God for his conversion at the age of eighteen. He told that in the winter, seeing a tree stripped of its leaves, and considering that within a little time the leaves would be renewed and after that the flowers and fruit appear, he received a high view of the providence and power of God, which was never effaced from his soul. This view set him perfectly loose from the world, and kindled in him such a love for God, that he could not tell whether it had increased in above forty years that he had lived since.

LXXVII. 10.—*It is mine own infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most Highest* (Prayer-Book Version).

Baroness Bunsen wrote in 1867 to her sister Lady Llanover, whose husband was dying: “Alas! the spirit of man will ever be asking, ‘Why is this? Why must there be pain and anguish and misery?’ I find in everything, the seemingly easy and the most complicated question, there is no peace but in saying, ‘Lord, thou knowest,’ and *I know not* and cannot comprehend; but I have held fast, and *will* hold fast, by the moral qualities of God, by the immensity of all His attributes, by His absolute and all-pervading mercy, as by His boundless power and wisdom: ‘I will say, it is mine own infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High’.”²

The writer of this letter was then aged seventy-six and had nearly ten years to live.

LXXVII. 20.—*Thou leddest Thy people like a flock.*

Canon Liddon wrote in 1863 to a friend:—

“As life goes on it seems to teach the lesson of thinking

¹ Mark Rutherford.

² “Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen,” Vol. II, p. 380.

little of private plans and hopes, and much of God's general providences."

LXXVIII. 25.—*Man did eat angels' food.*

"Now, upon a time, Immanuel made a feast for the town of Mansoul; and upon the feasting-day the townsfolk were come to the castle to partake of his banquet; and he feasted them with all manner of outlandish food—food that grew not in the fields of Mansoul, nor in all the whole kingdom of Universe: it was food that came from his Father's court. And so there was dish after dish set before them, and they were commanded freely to eat. But still, when a fresh dish was set before them, they would whisperingly say to each other, 'What is it?' for they wist not what to call it. They drank also of the water that was made wine, and were very merry with him. There was music also all the while at the table; and man did eat angels' food, and had honey given him out of the rock. So Mansoul did eat the food that was peculiar to the court; yea, they had now thereof to the full."¹

LXXVIII. 72.—*So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart.*

The nuns of Port-Royal commemorated the services of their beloved physician, Dr. Hamon, in the following words which they placed upon his grave: "Pavit eas in innocentia cordis sui" ("He fed them in the integrity of his heart").

LXXIX.—The place of wailing at Jerusalem.

Mr. Arthur Copping in his book, "A Journalist in the Holy Land," describes the Jewish Wailing Place in the Holy City. "To walk through the most populous quarter of Jerusalem," he says, "is to realize the tragic destiny of one race of mankind—the race that has survived a world-wide hatred and centuries of persecution. Christians and Mohammedans in that city are numbered by thousands, Jews by tens of thousands. Christians enjoy a full latitude in their holy places. Mohammedans, as the rulers, have superb mosques wherever they have been pleased to erect them. But for the Jews there is only a little outside alley to localize their heritage of glorious memories. There,

¹ Bunyan's "Holy War".

every Friday since a remote antiquity, they have besought Heaven to remedy their humiliation and their woes. Again and yet again they raise their voices in the opening words of the seventy-ninth Psalm: 'O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance; Thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps. . . . We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are about us. How long, Lord? Wilt Thou be angry for ever?'

"It was not on a Friday that we passed through the narrow, humble streets and came to the Place of Wailing. But we found there several Jews weeping and uttering their piteous lamentations. They spoke into the crevices of a huge wall that rose as a barrier between them and the site of their Temple of old—that Temple of which the great stones at the base of the wall are believed to be relics."

LXXX. 1.—*Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock.*

A prayer of Hurrell Froude:—

"O Lord, Heavenly Father, Thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep, what should we do without Thee for our guide and protector. When Thou turnest away Thy face, we are troubled. When Thou withdrawest Thine aid, we fall a prey to our enemies. Unless Thou gavest us Thine help again, to what dark places would our own thoughts carry us?"

LXXX. 19.—*Turn us, O Lord of hosts: shew us Thy countenance and we shall be whole.*

St. Augustine says on this verse:—

"For whithersoever the soul of man turns itself, unless towards Thee, it is riveted upon sorrows, yea, though it is riveted on things beautiful. And yet they, out of Thee, and out of the soul, were not, unless they were from Thee."

PSALM LXXXIV.

LXXXIV. 1.—Paula, the friend of St. Jerome, was seen by those who were gathered round her in her last hour to move her lips, and when they stooped to listen, they heard the words, "How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts".

LXXXIV. 3.—*Yea, the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself—even Thine altars.*

The idea that the human spirit, when released from the flesh, may hover like a bird round the altars of God, is expressed in a memorial tablet in the country church of Brampton Brian, near Church Stretton. The tablet recalls the name of a young man of twenty-seven, who died and was buried in Geneva: "Spiritus autem has patrias circumvolat aras" ("But his spirit hovers around these home altars").

The ancient sanctuary of the Druids at Stonehenge was, in the time of Gilbert White of Selborne, a favourite breeding place of daws. "These birds," he says, "deposit their nests in the interstices between the upright and the impost stones of that amazing work of antiquity, which circumstance alone speaks the prodigious height of the upright stones, that they should be tall enough to secure those nests from the annoyance of shepherd boys, who are always idling round that place."

LXXXIV. 4.—*Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house.*

In the old days of Islam the mosque was the fitting scene for all the chief concerns of life. "Here an important journey should have its start and finish; in the old days a man's camel knelt by instinct at the door of the mosque."¹

LXXXIV. 5-7.—*The valley of Baca.*

Mercy said in the Valley of Humiliation:—

"I think I am as well in this valley as I have been anywhere else in all our journey: the place, methinks, suits with my spirit. I love to be in such places where there is no rattling with coaches, nor rumbling with wheels. Methinks here one may, without much molestation, be thinking what he is, whence he came, what he has done, and to what the King has called him: here one may think, and break at heart, and melt one's spirit, until one's eyes become 'as the fishpools of Heshbon'. They that go rightly through this 'Valley of Baca, make it a well; the rain,' that God sends down from heaven upon them that are here, 'also filleth the pools'. This valley is that from whence also the King will give to them their vineyards; and they that go through it shall sing as Christian did, for all he met with Apollyon."

LXXXIV. 10.—*A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand.*

¹ S. H. Leeder, "Veiled Mysteries of Egypt," p. 35.

The saintly Jew Nachmanides performed the pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1267 and found the city a heap of ruins, owing to the ravages of the Mongols. He described his experiences in a letter to his son. "In spite of all the afflictions which met his eye, and in spite of his longing for the friends and kinsmen whom the aged pilgrim had forsaken without hope of ever seeing again, Nachmanides is able to declare that for all those losses he is amply compensated by the joy of being a day in thy courts, O Jerusalem, visiting the ruins of the Temple and crying over the ruined Sanctuary; 'where I am permitted to caress the stones, to fondle the dust, and to weep over thy ruins. I wept bitterly, but I found joy in my tears. I tore my garments, but I felt relieved by it.' Nor does the Jew's sublime optimism fail him even in view of that desolation:—

"He who thought us worthy to let us see Jerusalem in her desertion, He shall bless us to behold her again, built and restored, when the glory of the Lord will return unto her—you, my son, you all shall live to see the salvation of Jerusalem and the comfort of Zion!"¹

LXXXIV. 10.—*A doorkeeper in the house of my God.*

As an old man John Bright wrote to some Quaker friends who had appointed him an elder in the year 1875:—

"The labours of my life have taken me out of the way of service for our little church, and have to a large extent unfitted me for it. I feel that there is nothing above the humblest office—shall I say that of doorkeeper?—which I could properly undertake."²

After his conversion, John Donne said he was now gladder to be a doorkeeper in the House of God, than he could be to enjoy the noblest of all temporal employments.

LXXXV. 6.—*Wilt not Thou revive us again?*

James Gilmour of Mongolia wrote in 1890 to an old college friend:—

"You say you want reviving—go direct to Jesus and ask it straight out, and you'll get it straight away. This revived state is not a thing you need to work yourself up into, or need

¹ C. F. Abbott, "Israel in Europe," p. 487.

² "Life of John Bright," by G. M. Trevelyan, p. 103.

others to help you to rise into, or need to come to England to have operated upon you—Jesus can effect it anywhere, and does effect it everywhere whenever a man or woman, or men and women, ask it. Ask and ye shall receive.”¹

LXXXV. 10.—*Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*

“ And, in the tumult and excess
Of act and passion under sun,
We sometimes hear—oh, soft and far,
As silver star did touch with star,
The kiss of Peace and Righteousness
Through all things that are done.”

—MRS. BROWNING.²

LXXXVI. 11.—“ The crowning achievement of the educator is the unification of the personality. ‘ Unite my heart to fear Thy name.’ This unification is achieved mainly by the power of devotion to a noble personality.”—W. ROBERTSON NICOLL.

LXXXVI. 17.—*Shew me a token for good.*

This verse is connected with the “ Miracle of the Holy Thorn,” which stirred the heart of Pascal. Dr. Charles Beard, in his “ History of Port-Royal,” tells how the child-niece of Pascal, Marguérite Périer, had suffered for three and a half years from a serious malady in the left eye. “ For eighteen months various remedies had been tried in vain, and now in March, 1656, the operation of cautery had been finally resolved upon, as a last resource, which might or might not prove successful; and the child’s father was on his way from Auvergne to be present. Not far from Port-Royal de Paris lived M. de la Potherie, a worthy ecclesiastic, distantly related to La Mère Angélique, who had a passion for collecting relics, and considered it a pious duty to provide them with shrines of fit magnificence. Among others, he had become possessed of a thorn from our Saviour’s crown, of undoubted authenticity. He could not selfishly keep so precious a relic for the admiration of his own piety alone, and lent it, therefore, for a time to the sisterhood of Port-Royal. They received it with due reverence, and appointed Friday,

¹ “ Life of James Gilmour,” p. 261.

² “ Human Life’s Mystery.”

24 March, for a festival in its honour. Mass was said; and it was afterwards long remembered that at the introit of the service for the day occurred those words of the eighty-sixth Psalm, 'Show me a token for good, that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed'. Then after a solemn anthem in honour of the Holy Crown, the thorn was exposed upon a low altar, set in the middle of the choir, and the sisters, kneeling, kissed it one by one. Next came up the boarders to perform the same homage, their mistress, the Sœur Flavie Passart, standing by. As Marguérite Périer approached in her turn, her eye attracted the notice of Sœur Flavie, who with her own hands applied the relic to the swollen part. . . . Towards evening the child said, 'My eye is cured; it does not hurt me now'.

"Marguérite Périer survived her sudden, and as she firmly believed, miraculous cure, almost eighty years. 'Long after the destruction of Port-Royal . . . she was revered by the devotees of the sect as a living relic of the days of Blaise Pascal and Angélique Arnauld.' " ¹

"The Miracles of the Holy Thorn," says Dr. Beard in a later passage, "are a wall of separation between Port-Royal and sober Protestant sympathies. The cure of Marguérite Périer is the first step in that abandonment of rational faith, which conducts us, by a long descent, to the miracles at the tomb of the Deacon Paris."

LXXXVII. 1-3.—*His foundation is in the holy mountains.*

St. Bernard wrote of the monastery of Clairvaux:—

"Although the monastery is situated in a valley, it has its foundation on the holy hills, whose gates the Lord loveth more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of it, because the glorious and wonderful God therein worketh great marvels. There the insane recover their reason; and although their outward man is worn away, inwardly they are born again. There the proud are humbled, the rich are made poor, and the poor have the gospel preached to them, and the darkness of sinners is changed into light. A large multitude of blessed poor from the ends of the earth have there assembled, yet have they one heart and one mind; justly therefore, do all who dwell there

¹ C. Beard, "Port-Royal," Vol. I, pp. 304-7.

rejoice with no empty joy. They have the certain hope of perennial joy—of their ascension heavenward already commenced. In Clairvaux they have found Jacob's ladder, with Angels upon it; some descending, who so provide for their bodies that they faint not by the way; others ascending, who so rule their souls that their bodies hereafter may be glorified with them.¹

FREE AMONG THE DEAD.

LXXXVIII. 5.—“Christianity itself is among us as one that is wounded, ‘free among the dead,’ and only free there. Do you not see that Christianity under its present manifestations, being *remedial*, separation and sorrow are its natural friends? . . . Christ's kingdom is a kingdom of patience. Think of that solemn walk, when He ‘went before’ His disciples to Jerusalem; His counsel of absolute self-renunciation to the young ruler; His acceptance of Peter's ‘Lo, we have left all’; His rebuke to the self-seeking of the two brethren; his unfolding of his own approaching humiliation. What is it but a call to Humanity to strip off its garments one by one, riches, affection, glory, and lay them down in the way by which its Lord walks to death?”
—DORA GREENWELL.²

LXXXVIII. 6.—*Thou hast vexed me with all Thy storms* (Prayer-Book Version).

The Rev. John Smith, M.A., the beloved schoolmaster whom Dean Vaughan called “the Christ of Harrow,” suffered mental eclipse in his later years. The secret of the doom that overshadowed him was known only to one or two intimate friends, but a boy sitting near him in chapel was awed by the deep tone, as of conscious experience, in which he repeated the response from the eighty-eighth Psalm, “Thou hast vexed me with all Thy storms”.

Lamennais, in one of his moods of dark despondency, said that he was destined to know nothing of life except its storms.

LXXXVIII. 15.—*From my youth up Thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind* (Prayer-Book Version).

Lucy Snowe, the heroine of “Villette,” quotes this verse in

¹ J. Cotter Morison, “Life of St. Bernard,” p. 36.

² “Two Friends.”

describing her sufferings when left alone during the holidays in Madame Beck's boarding-school. "Motive there was none why I should try to recover or wish to live; and yet quite unendurable was the pitiless and haughty voice in which Death challenged me to engage his unknown terrors. When I tried to pray I could only utter these words: 'From my youth up Thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind'.

"Most true was it."

LXXXIX. 19.—*I have laid help upon One that is mighty.*

In the spring months of 1637, when he was himself a prisoner in Aberdeen, Samuel Rutherford wrote to Alexander Henderson:—

"As for your case, my reverend and dearest brother, you are the talking of the North and South, and looked to as if you were all crystal glass; your motes and dust will soon be proclaimed, and trumpets blown at your slips. But I know you have laid help upon One that is mighty."

LXXXIX. 47.—*Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?*

Luther wrote to Melanchthon from the Wartburg on 12 May, 1521:—

"Sitting here I ponder all day long over the state of the Church, and I see before me those words of Psalm LXXXVIII. [LXXXIX. 47 in our version,] 'Wherefore hast Thou made all men in vain?' Ah God, what a terrible image of the wrath of God is that hateful kingdom of the Romish Antichrist! And I lament my own hardness because I am not wholly melted into tears, that I too, might weep in fountains of waters for the slain of the children of my people.¹ But there is none that riseth and layeth hold of God² or that sets himself like a wall for the house of Israel, in this last day of His wrath. . . . Do you therefore press on as a minister of the Word and fortify the walls and towers of Jerusalem, until they attack you also. You know your gifts and your calling. I pray especially for you—if my prayer (as I doubt not) availeth anything. Do the same for me and let us share this burden. We two only are still in the fighting line; after me they will seek for you."³

¹ A reference to Jer. ix. 1.

² Is. LXIV. 7.

³ Enders, "Luthers Briefwechsel," Vol. I, p. 148.

PSALM xc.

xc.—The Psalm *Domine, refugium* is used with Psalm xxxix. in the Burial Service of the Church of England. It has been sung on many occasions of national mourning at St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey. Herder calls it "that ancient Psalm, that hymn of eternity". It was a favourite Psalm of the Emperor Charles V, and was sung by him on lonely nights in the monastery of Yuste. In Cardinal Newman's "Dream of Gerontius" it is the song of the redeemed souls in Purgatory. As a birthday Psalm it is mentioned in the "Life of Dr. McLeod Campbell of Row," who was accustomed to read it at worship on such family occasions. His own birthday was 4 May, and in writing to his eldest son in 1862 he added "Psalm xc." after the date and year.¹ William Blake wrote to Flaxman, "In the Divine bosom is our dwelling-place".

The opening lines were sung at the funeral of John Hampden. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, in the biography of his wife, tells of a visit to Jordans :—

"The journey was continued to Great Hampden Church, where the hero of the Civil Wars is laid. She brought her friends to the end of the road up which the soldiers brought his body, and she liked me to say the first verses of the Psalms they sang coming and going. On their way up carrying his body, they sang :—

‘Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place
In generations all,
Before Thou ever hadst brought forth
The mountains great or small ;’

and they went away singing :—

‘Judge me, O God, and plead my cause
Against th’ ungodly nation ;
From the unjust and crafty man,
O be Thou my salvation.’ ”

Poets of John Hampden's age realized the mournful significance of the words, "We spend our years as a tale that is told" (ver. 9). John Donne has these lines in his "Anatomy of the World" :—

¹ "Memorials," Vol. II, p. 20.

"Old grandsires talk of yesterday with sorrow ;
 And for our children we reserve to-morrow.
 So short is life, that every peasant strives,
 In a torn house, or field, to have three lives ;
 And as in lasting, so in length is man,
 Contracted to an inch, who was a span.
 For had a man at first in forests stray'd,
 Or shipwreck'd in the sea, one would have laid
 A wager, that an elephant or whale,
 That met him, would not hastily assail
 A thing so equal to him ; now, alas !
 The fairies and the pigmies well may pass
 As credible ; mankind decays so soon,
 We're scarce our fathers' shadows cast at noon."

Thinking of verse 10, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten," Sir Thomas Browne wrote: "There goes a great deal of providence to produce a man's life unto threescore". He considered it "not an unlawful prayer to desire to surpass the days of our Saviour ; or wish to outlive that age wherein He thought fittest to die". He added, however, that if "(as divinity affirms) there shall be no grey hairs in heaven, but all shall rise in the perfect state of men, we do but outlive those perfections in this world, to be recalled unto them by a greater miracle in the next, and run on here but to be retrograde hereafter".¹ "How many pulses made up the life of Methuselah," he wrote again, "were work for Archimedes ; common counters sum up the life of Moses his man."

xc. 10.—Miss E. T. McLaren says in her biography of the great Manchester preacher, that after Dr. McLaren had passed his seventieth birthday the Psalmist's words, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten," were often quoted by him, and especially when he was asked to do some one definite service from which he shrank. He had visions of how delightful it would be really and truly to "retire," to be done with never-ending "engagements". But when faced with the idea of coming to a decision he recalled words of John Woolman: "There was a care on my mind so to pass my time, that nothing

¹ "Religio Medici."

might hinder me from the most steady attention to the voice of the true Shepherd". He could not say that he heard that voice telling him to give up his work, and yet the thought of a quiet life allured him.

The words of verse 10 are often associated with the Christian's declining years. "If by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away." Octogenarians no longer dread an apathetic old age, intellectually, like that of the Abbot Boniface in "The Abbot". Boniface is ending his career, as he began it, as a humble monk at Dundrennan, and after Queen Mary's defeat at Langside, he is questioned on various points by Edward Glendinning, his successor at Kennaquhair, and by Roland Graeme. As they leave the garden, the ex-Abbot resumes his spade:—

"'I could be sorry for these men,' he said, 'ay, and for that poor Queen; but what avail earthly sorrows to a man of fourscore?—and it is a rare dropping morning for the early colewort.'"

Ruskin wrote to his father in 1848: "If one were to calculate averageable life at eighty years, with a doubtful evening after that time, and suppose this represented by a day of sixteen hours from six morning till ten night, I am now at *noon*, you at *six* in the evening—with both of us the day is far spent. I never think my day worth much after twelve o'clock, and yet I fear—forgive me if I am wrong—that neither of us have either chosen our master or begun our work."¹

Bishop King replied to one who had written to him on his eightieth birthday: "Have you ever noticed the difference between the Prayer-Book version and the Bible version of the ninetieth Psalm, verse 10. Instead of 'we are gone' the Bible version is 'we flee away' [*sic*]. That is much brighter and more suggestive of the truth of the continuous life. The word for 'flee away' is the same as that used in Psalm fifty-five, 'Flee away and be at rest'."²

The words "labour and sorrow" must have been in Carlyle's thoughts when he wrote to his mother in 1843:—

¹ E. T. Cook, "The Life of Ruskin," Vol. I, p. 228.

² "Spiritual Letters," p. 171.

"I have shifted my writing-table, and now every time I look up *your* affectionate sorrowing face looks down on me from the Picture-Frame above the mantelpiece: my dear good Mother! It has a sorrow in it, that face, which goes into my very heart. But it is not to be called a mere 'sorrow' either; it is a noble *weariness* rather, as of much work *done*. I will wish all men and all women such a 'sorrow'." ¹

xc. 12.—"Give my love to dear Mrs. Paterson," wrote McLeod Campbell to his friend Erskine. "I doubt not that she at seventy-one—as I, at sixty-two—feels that she is *only learning* to number her days aright [ver. 12]; and so is it with you also, beloved brother, so near seventy-four! But what our God has taught us makes the consciousness that we are under His teaching still, and shall be for ever, a comfort which our own slowness to learn, however humbling, cannot take from us." ²

Charles Lamb says in his essay on New Year's Eve:—

"Not childhood alone, but the young man till thirty, never feels practically that he is mortal. He knows it indeed, and if need were, he could preach a homily on the fragility of life; but he brings it not home to himself, any more than in a hot June we can appropriate to our imagination the freezing days of December. But now—shall I confess a truth?—I feel these audits but too powerfully. I begin to count the probabilities of my duration, and to grudge at the expenditure of moments and shortest periods, like misers' farthings. In proportion as the years both lessen and shorten, I set more count upon their periods and would fain lay my ineffectual finger upon the spoke of the great wheel."

Sir Thomas Browne might have comforted Elia with these words:—

"There is some other hand that twines the thread of life than that of nature; we are not only ignorant in antipathies and occult qualities; our ends are as obscure as our beginnings; the line of our days is drawn by night, and the various effects therein by a pencil that is invisible, wherein, though we confess

¹ "New Letters" (1904), Vol. I, p. 287.

² "Memorials," Vol. II, p. 27.

our ignorance, I am sure we do not err if we say, it is the hand of God.”¹

The Psalm ends with strains of gladness, “Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants and Thy glory unto their children” (ver. 16). “Show Thy servant Thy work,” says Dora Greenwell, “and his own will indeed be easy. . . . ‘Midnight is past,’ sings the sailor on the Southern Ocean. ‘Midnight is past; the Cross begins to bend.’”²

xc. 16, 17.—Dr. Neale remarks, in his “Commentary on the Psalms,” that there is a twofold Rabbinical tradition respecting this passage that it was the original prayer recited by Moses as a blessing on the work of making the Tabernacle and its ornaments, and that subsequently he employed it as the usual formula of benediction for any newly undertaken task, whenever God’s glorious majesty was to be consulted for an answer by Urim and Thummim.

xc. 17.—*Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.*

Charles Kingsley was overheard in his last illness murmuring quietly to himself, “How beautiful God is! How beautiful God is!”

PSALM XCI.

XCI.—This “Talismanic” or “Traveller’s” Psalm is still used in many households at prayers before the departure of any member of the family on a journey. It has a memorable association with the great Plague of London in 1665 as described in Defoe’s “Journal”. The hero, a saddler of Aldgate, was advised by his brother to escape from the doomed city:—

“In the retirement of the evening,” says the saddler, “I endeavoured to resolve first, what it was my duty to do; and I stated the arguments with which my brother had pressed me to go into the country, and I set against them the strong impressions which I had on my mind for staying; the visible call I seemed to have from the particular circumstances of my calling, and the care due from me for the preservation of my effects, which were, as I might say, my estate; also the intimations

¹ “Religio Medici.”

² “The Patience of Hope.”

which I thought I had from Heaven; that to me signified a kind of direction to venture, and it occurred to me that if I had what I might call a direction to stay, I ought to suppose it contained a promise of being preserved, if I obeyed. This lay close to me, and my mind seemed more and more encouraged to stay than ever, and supported with a secret satisfaction that I should be kept. Add to this, that turning over the Bible which lay before me, and while my thoughts were more than ordinarily serious upon the question, I cried out, 'Well, I know not what to do'; 'Lord, direct me!' and the like; and at that juncture I happened to stop turning over the book, at the ninety-first Psalm, and casting my eye on the second verse, I read on to the seventh verse inclusive, and after that included the tenth.

"I need scarce tell the reader, that from that moment I resolved that I would stay in the town; and casting myself entirely upon the goodness and protection of the Almighty, would not seek any other shelter whatever; and that as my times were in His hands, He was as able to keep me in a Time of Infection as in a Time of Health; and if He did not think fit to deliver me, still I was in His hands, and it was meet He should do with me as should seem good to Him."

Captain Hedley Vicars wrote to a friend:—

"The little book of Psalms you gave me I take with me whenever I go out to walk. I have just learned by heart Psalm xci. and it has filled me with confidence in Jesus."

On the words of verse 5, "the arrow that flieth by day," Dora Greenwell has these words:—

"The spiritual life is a world within itself; with joys, with sorrows, I would say also with temptations peculiarly its own; and he has not advanced far within its borders who has not learnt the truth of that saying, 'I beheld, and lo! by the very gate of heaven was there a road to hell'. Who has not prayed with holy Herbert for deliverance '*from the arrow that flieth by noonday*'? There is much even in the renewed mind which, if suffered to remain there, would gradually eat away the heart of its strength and purity; something in each believer which he imagined he had left behind when he forsook all and gave himself up to follow Christ, but he finds that it has rushed after

him like Care in the ancient proverb, and holds to him with as tight a grasp as ever.”¹

XCI. 6.—*The pestilence that walketh in darkness.*

“Neither war with all its pomp, nor the earthquake, nor the tempest in its overwhelming fury, has been more distinctly personified than the Pestilence that walketh in darkness. It is with the description of a Plague that Homer begins his divine poem, and the noblest of Grecian tragedies [the ‘*Œdipus Tyrannus*’ of Sophocles] is commenced in a similar manner; and in both cases, contagion is the immediate messenger of heavenly wrath.”²

XCI. 11.—*For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.*

A Jewish writer remarks on this verse:—

“Throughout the Maccabean period men saw Angels on every side as armed men, and beheld warriors in the sky, for they themselves were warlike. When after the Roman destruction of the State the valour of the Jews cooled, and they no longer dreamed of recovering their independence by force of arms, they met Angels in the form of Elijah, the type of the national intensity and energy, yet withal himself unarmed. . . . As time went on the Angels changed with it. Philo, the noble-minded Alexandrian Jew, thought that God would not have created this imperfect world without some intermediate agency; so the Angels appeared to him as these intermediate agencies. Familiar with all the languages that come from the tortured heart, like Gabriel knowing all the tongues of men, our prophets and our priests were called Angels. ‘Who are ministering Angels?’ asked a Talmudist, and he answered, ‘The Rabbis’.”³

In the life of Bishop George Moberly of Salisbury, the following story is told by Mrs. Moberly:—

“One day I was walking down Kingsgate Street [Winchester] to our house when I saw the little children with their nurses on the opposite side of the street coming back from their walk. Little George, about four or five years old, caught sight of me and ran across the road to meet me. At the same moment,

¹ “The Patience of Hope.”

² Stebbing’s Introduction to the “History of the Plague Year”.

³ Israel Abrahams, “Aspects of Judaism,” pp. 18, 27.

Lady Rivers' large carriage with two horses dashed up and caught him. It was a terrible instant. Both the nurses and I saw him among the horses' legs, and it seemed impossible that anything could save him, when to our surprise he was seen standing by his nurse on the pavement. The carriage did not stop, the driver having apparently not seen him. I hurried across the road, and in reply to our question the little boy said, 'An angel came and took me out'."

This little boy was afterwards a scholar of Winchester College and Corpus Christi, Oxford; he won the Stanhope, Arnold, and Ellerton prizes. After many years of clerical work, he became Principal of the Lichfield Theological College and died in 1895. To the end of his life he said that he remembered the incident perfectly, and that he had been lifted up and put back on the pavement by some one in white.¹

William Blake has these lines in his poem "Night":—

"Farewell, green fields and happy grove
Where flocks have took delight:
Where lambs have nibbled, silent move
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen they pour blessing
And joy without ceasing
On each bud and blossom,
On each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest
Where birds are cover'd warm;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them from all harm.
If they see any weeping
That should have been sleeping
They pour sleep on their head
And sit down by their bed."

Verses 12-16 were chosen by President Cleveland as his inaugural passage.

XCI. 14-16.—Father Tyrrell wrote in his "Autobiography":—

"It was on 21 March, 1877, that, being full of St. Benedict

¹ "Dulce Domum," by C. A. E. Moberly, p. 71.

as portrayed by Montalembert, and also in a peculiarly hopeless state about my own reform, straight in the teeth of my Protestant conscience, I prayed to the Saint, if peradventure he might hear or help. I had really no faith in what I was doing, but clutched as a drowning man will at a straw. As well as I can remember I was reading Compline (as I did then at my night prayers) and had stopped in the middle of a Psalm, by way of distraction, to make this experiment. I resumed in due course at the words, 'Quoniam in me speravit, liberabo eum; protegam eum, quoniam cognovit nomen meum; clamabit ad me et ego exaudiam eum; cum ipso sum in tribulatione, eripiam eum et glorificabo eum, etc., etc.' I have lived on that and two or three similar coincidences ever since."

XCI. 16.—*With long life will I satisfy him.*

Phillips Brooks preached for the last time but one on 15 January, 1893. A lady who heard him wrote: "It seems so significant that his text was 'Life!' 'Thou shalt satisfy the king with long life.' 'Life for ever and ever'—over and over again that was the burden of it. And he read these words from 'Saul':—

'How good is man's life, the mere living; how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses forever in joy!'

And even as he spoke with Life upon his lips, I saw written plainly upon his face that other word, Death."¹

XCII. 4.—*For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work; I will triumph in the work of Thy hands.*

Matelda greets Dante and Virgil with these words as they reach the Summit of Mount Purgatory. The Psalm was called "Il Salmo Delectasti," because, in the Vulgate, the fifth verse contains the words, "Thou hast made me glad".

("Delectasti me, Domine, in factura tua, et in operibus manuum tuarum exsultabo.")

XCII. 13, 14.—*Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.*

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.

¹ "Life of Phillips Brooks," Vol. II, p. 933.

One of the most beautiful examples of the aged saint is to be found in M. d'Andilly of Port-Royal, who retired from the world at the age of fifty-seven and died at the age of eighty-five. He was the eldest son of the barrister, Antoine Arnauld, and a favourite at Court. Fontaine, in his "Memoirs," gives this picture of his serene old age :—

"Age which weakens all things, seemed only to redouble his ardour. I seem even now to see him and listen to him as he spoke to me with his glance of fire, his eager manner and language, and a bearing which seemed to contradict the facts as to his years. At eighty-five, his body had the activity of a lad of fifteen. His bright eyes, his quick and firm walk, his voice of thunder, his upright, healthy frame, so full of vigour, his white hair which suited so well the rosy tints of his complexion, his grace in mounting on horseback and his firm seat in the saddle, his tenacious memory, his quickness of mind, his sureness of hand, alike in guiding his pen and in cutting trees—these were all like a kind of immortality, according to the words of St. Jerome, an image of the coming resurrection, and if I may say so, the reward of an excellent virtue."

M. d'Andilly was the head gardener of Port-Royal des Champs, and used to send to royal ladies and to Cardinal Mazarin, sealed baskets of his choicest fruits. His friends placed under his portrait the emblem of a swan which moves peacefully on the waters and which sings as its death-hour draws near, and the motto they chose for him was "*Quam dulci senex quiete!*"¹

XCII. 14.—*They shall still bring forth fruit in old age.*

Carlyle wrote in 1845 to his brother Aleck in Canada :—

"Good Mother! she is quite cheery yet, when moderately well in health; looks back with still resignation on many a sorrow, and forward with humble pious trust. It is beautiful to see how in the gradual decay of all other strength, the strength of her heart and affection still survives, as it were, fresher than ever;—the *soul* of Life refuses to grow old with the *body* of Life; one of the most affecting sights!"²

¹ Sainte-Beuve, "Port-Royal," Vol. II, pp. 259, 260.

² "New Letters" (1904), Vol. II, p. 3.

xciv. 17.—Basil of Seleucia records an old Christian tradition that when Lazarus came out of the tomb he had these words on his lips: "Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had quickly ¹ dwelt in silence".

xcv. 4.—*In His hand are the deep places of the earth* (Prayer-Book Version: *all the corners of the earth*).

Ruskin includes this verse in one of the loveliest passages in "Modern Painters":—

"As we pass beneath the hills which have been shaken by earthquake and torn by convulsion, we find that periods of perfect repose succeed those of destruction. The pools of calm water lie clear beneath their fallen rocks, the water-lilies gleam, and the reeds whisper among their shadows; the village rises again over the forgotten graves, and its church-tower, white through the storm twilight, proclaims a renewed appeal to His protection in whose hand 'are all the corners of the earth, and the strength of the hills is His also'. There is no loveliness of Alpine valley that does not teach the same lesson. It is just where 'the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place,' that, in process of years, the fairest meadows bloom between the fragments, the clearest rivulets murmur from their crevices among the flowers, and the clustered cottages, each sheltered beneath some strength of mossy stone, now to be removed no more, and with their pastured flocks around them, safe from the eagle's stoop and the wolf's ravin, have written upon their fronts, in simple words, the mountaineer's faith in the ancient promise—'Neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh'; 'For thou shalt be in league with the Stones of the Field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee'."

xcv. 4.—*The strength of the hills is His also.*

Canon Liddon wrote in 1864 to Mrs. Hamilton, after a visit to St. Moritz, in the Engadine:—

"I have often tried to make out whether one learns more of God from mountain scenery or from the sea. I suppose that in reality He is equally to be studied everywhere in nature, but it has seemed this year as if one meets Him in the 'strength of the

¹ This word is read in the margin instead of "almost".

hills' as nowhere else. 'Their stillness, their height, their abysses, their robe of perpetual white, their numberless beauties and dangers, unexplored by the most daring climbers, their very material so unlike the formation of lowland districts, their mysterious beauty changing with the hours of the day, yet at bottom the same—all remind one of Him.'

xcv. 6.—*O come, let us worship and bow down.*

"I was greatly encouraged," wrote Dr. Marcus Dods, "by some words of Cuthbert Hall's: 'I believe in the human need of God, and the psychological necessity of worship as a part of life. The East would have taught me this, if the West had not already done so. The souls of men must speak to God, for they are of Him.'"

xcvi. 5.—*For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.*

Hurrell Froude wrote in his "Journal" on 19 October, 1826:—*Half-past three a.m.* By the side of a turf fire at Minygfard. In this morning's Psalms there is, 'As for the gods of the heathen, they are but vanity; but it is the Lord that made the heavens'. What beautiful associations come into one's head at the name of Cader Idris, 'the seat of the giant'. Why not, when we recollect who that giant is?"

xcvi. 8.—*Bring an offering and come into His courts.*

Wordsworth closes his Thanksgiving Ode of 1816 with these lines:—

"Awake! the majesty of God revere!

Go,—and with foreheads meekly bowed,
Present your prayers—go—and rejoice aloud—

The Holy One will hear!

And what, 'mid silence deep, with faith sincere,

Ye, in your low and undisturb'd estate,
Shall simply feel and purely meditate—

Of warnings—from the unprecedented might,
Which, in our time, the impious have disclosed;

And of more arduous duties thence imposed

Upon the future advocates of right;

Of mysteries reveal'd,

And judgments unrepeal'd,

Of earthly revolution,
 And final retribution,—
 To His omniscience will appear
 As offering not unworthy to find place
 On this high Day of Thanks, before the throne of grace."

xcvi. 10.—*Tell it out among the heathen that the Lord is King* (Prayer-Book Version).

Mr. R. L. Gales writes :—

"This verse in Justin Martyr's time ran, 'Tell it out among the heathen that the Lord hath reigned from the tree,' and in this form it passed into the offices of the Church. 'Dicite in gentibus quia Dominus regnavit a ligno.' It is well known that in all crucifixes earlier than the eleventh century the Figure is robed and crowned." ¹

xcvii. 1.—*The Lord reigneth ; let the earth rejoice.*

On his first Sunday in Edinburgh, Dr. Johnson attended service in the chapel founded by Lord Chief Baron Smith, for the worship of the Church of England. The sermon was preached from these words, "Because the Lord reigneth, let the earth be glad". "I was sorry," says Boswell, "to think Mr. Johnson did not attend to the sermon, Mr. Carr's low voice not being strong enough to reach his hearing."

xcvii. 11.—*Light is sown for the righteous.*

Mr. Dan Crawford wrote "from the long grass":—

"These lines are penned to the flicker of a tiny lamp burning linseed oil: not true linseed, really sesame, and not a bad light. This oil is grown for us by the Lubans: a new crop is just being planted, and these oil-growers speak about 'growing' our light for us. Thus literally 'light is sown for the righteous'. Who ever heard of the Israelites having mineral oil? Obviously it must have been sown; and Christ the Light was sown in sorrow too." ²

xcvii. 12.—*Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous.*

"When one considers the tragic history of the race, the joyful tone of the Jewish Prayer Book is amazing. Only very

¹ "Studies in Arcady" (2nd series), p. 115.

² "Thinking Black."

rarely are their terrible and peculiar troubles (other than the Biblical captivity) alluded to. A few instances of very sad and terribly shrewd expressions of sorrow, however, stand out. 'Our soul is shrunk by reason of the sword and captivity and pestilence and plague, and of every trouble and sorrow.' And again, 'Look from Heaven and see how we have become a scorn and derision among the nations. . . . Strangers say "there is no hope or expectancy for you".'"¹

PSALM C.

c.—Wordsworth quotes from this Psalm in his Thanksgiving Ode for 18 January, 1816 :—

"But hark—the summons ! Down the placid lake
Floats the soft cadence of the church-tower bells ;
Bright shines the Sun, as if his beams would wake
The tender insects sleeping in their cells ;
Bright shines the sun—and not a breeze to shake
The drops that tip the melting icicles.
Oh, enter now His Temple gate !"

c. 2.—*Serve the Lord with gladness.*

Bishop Collins of Gibraltar wrote in 1910 : "My path is clear for the present—simply to do all I can to get well, and try to follow Bishop Hacket. That motto of his, 'Serve God and be cheerful,' has always been a favourite one of mine."²

c. 3.—*It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves.*

This text, which was chosen by Edward FitzGerald for his tombstone, has a well-known and intimate association with the domestic life of Melancthon. One of the Reformer's most enduring griefs was the loss, in 1529, of his baby son George, a promising and lovely child. This was the first bereavement he had known in Wittenberg, and there can be little doubt that the shock, which as Luther said, pressed upon him with exceptional severity, affected his nerves and health during the controversies at Marburg and Augsburg. Long years afterwards, he confessed in letters to friends that the words "It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves," on which he lighted by chance in turning

¹ "Spectator," 18 January, 1913.

² Canon Mason, "Life of Bishop Collins," p. 166.

over the Psalter, were the first which brought consolation to his sorrowing heart.¹

Ci.—Mr. Spurgeon calls this the "Psalm of Pious Resolutions". It was sung at the death of Monica, mother of St. Augustine, and was a favourite Psalm of Bishop Ridley.

The words of verse 10, "There shall no deceitful person dwell in my house," were quoted by Lord Bacon in his famous letter of advice to the royal favourite, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. He counselled the Prime Minister of James I to make this Psalm his rule in the promotion of courtiers.

Eyding, in his "Life of Ernest the Pious," Duke of Saxe-Gotha, related that he sent an unfaithful minister a copy of the 101st Psalm; and that it became a proverb in the country, when an official had done anything wrong, "He will certainly soon receive the Prince's Psalm to read".²

PSALM CII.

"This is the mourner's prayer when he is faint,
And to the eternal Father breathes his plaint."

—JOHN KEBLE.

CII. 9.—*I have eaten ashes like bread.*

St. Francis of Assisi is said to have sprinkled ashes on any dainty food served him at great tables, saying with a smile, "Brother Ash is pure".³

CII. 11.—*My days are like a shadow that declineth.*

"Life is a passing shadow, says the Scripture. Is it the shadow of a tower, of a tree? A shadow that prevails for a while? No, it is the shadow of a bird in his flight—away flies the bird and there is neither bird nor shadow."⁴

CII. 14.—*Thy servants think upon her stones: and it pitieth them to see her in the dust* (Prayer-Book Version).

Sir E. T. Cook says that the title of Ruskin's book, "The

¹ The original passages are dealt with more fully, and Dr. John Ker's mistaken references are corrected in the "Expositor's Dictionary of Texts," Vol. I, p. 462.

² "Psalm Mosaics."

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ "The Talmud," quoted in the "Quarterly Review," October, 1867, p. 461.

Stones of Venice," had a double meaning. He hoped to make those stones touchstones—tests of the good and the bad in all architecture; crucial examples, too, of the connexion between national feeling and national architecture. But also it was from a city fast falling into ruin that his teaching was to be drawn: "Thy servants think upon her stones, and it pitieth them to see her in the dust". The prophet had no time to lose in uttering his message, for the waves were gaining fast against the stones of Venice.¹

CII. 27.—*Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end.*

St. Augustine writes in his "Confessions":—

"For Thou art most high and art not changed, neither in Thee doth to-day come to a close; yet in Thee doth it come to a close because all such things also are in Thee. For they had no way to pass away, unless Thou upheldest them. And since Thy years fail not, Thy years are one to-day. How many of ours and our fathers' years have flowed away through Thy 'to-day,' and from it received the measure and the mould of such being as they had; and still others shall flow away, and so receive the mould of their degree of being. But Thou art still the same, and all things of to-morrow, and all beyond and all of yesterday, and all behind it, Thou hast done to-day."²

PSALM CIII.

After the death of his wife in 1878, John Bright received a letter of affectionate condolence from Bishop Fraser of Manchester. It contained these words:—

"I have often heard your home-life described not long ago by our common friend, E. J. Broadfield; and his picture of your household gathering together, and yourself reading the 103rd Psalm to them, is one that will not soon fade from my memory. . . . And she, whom you have lost, was part of this picture; and I can understand what the blank must be, now that she is gone. As a fellow-Christian man, I pray that God may comfort you, and that you may still be able to say in those beautiful words which sank so deeply into Edward Broad-

¹ "The Life of Ruskin," Vol. I, p. 256.

² Dr. Pusey's translation.

field's ears, as he heard you read them a few weeks ago, 'Praise the Lord, O my soul; and *forget not all His benefits*.'"¹

CIII. 1.—Dr. Griffith John, the great Chinese missionary, completed his jubilee of service in 1905. Soon afterwards he had a serious breakdown, and was sent to rest at Yonkers, on the banks of the Hudson River (U.S.A.). In December, 1907, he returned to Hankow. Dr. Wardlaw Thompson says:—

"The warmth and enthusiasm of the welcome accorded to him by his colleagues and by the Chinese Christians touched Dr. John very deeply. 'I feel now (he said) that I am *at home* once more, and the language of my heart is, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.'"

The spirit of Epictetus was that of the writer of this Psalm. This non-Christian ex-slave, in his classroom at Nicopolis, exhorted his hearers to praise God. "If we had any understanding," he said, "ought we not, both in public and in private, incessantly to sing and praise the Deity, and rehearse His benefits? Ought we not, whether we dig, or plough, or eat, to sing this hymn to God? Great is God, who has supplied us with these instruments to till the ground; great is God, who has given us hands and organs of digestion; who has given us to grow insensibly, to breathe in sleep. These things ought we forever to celebrate; but to make it the theme of the greatest and divinest hymn that He has given us the power to appreciate these gifts and to use them well."

CIII. 5.—*So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

"The life of the Parish Priest," said Bishop Francis Paget, "should be a life of perpetual youth."

Frederic Shields, the artist, had a great dislike of birds, because they woke him in the morning and disturbed him at his work. "'I hate all birds,' he exclaimed indignantly one day, 'winged vermin of the air, I detest the whole lot of them.' Glancing at the magnificent eagle in his design of St. John" (remarks his biographer), "I said mildly, 'You didn't hate that eagle, surely?'" His face changed, and with his fine disregard of logic, he said blandly, 'Oh, my child, I don't call an eagle a *bird*!'"

¹ "Life of John Bright," by G. M. Trevelyan, p. 424.

CIII. 9.—*He will not always chide.*

After the death of the Countess of Rosebery in 1890, the "Jewish Chronicle" wrote that the ladies who came to Dalmeny to carry on the solemn "purification" enjoined by the Hebrew rite, found in her room many touching proofs of the comfort she had derived in sickness from the promises of the Old Testament. On the wall hung a frame with the words of the priestly benediction in Hebrew, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee". "There were Hebrew and English Prayer Books for Sabbaths and festivals," and a Bible lay near these, with a book-marker left at the 103rd Psalm. Dr. Adler had chosen this Psalm, with the twenty-third, as suitable to be read to or by the patient, when she became too weak to recite the full Friday evening and Sabbath morning service, as she had insisted on doing in her earlier weeks of the illness. The words, "He will not always chide" were repeated four times before her devotional spirit could be satisfied.

CIII. 13.—*Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.*

Frances Willard left her father's farm at the age of twenty to become a school teacher. There was no need for her to work, but she wished to be of use in the world, to count for something. On 5 June, 1860, she wrote from the schoolhouse in Illinois :—

"Father walked over to the schoolhouse to bring me a bundle and to say good-bye last night before he went away. I turned away, saying in answer to his half-dreary, half-sad words (for I knew he was sorry for me), 'Good-bye, father, I'm not afraid'. But the tears blinded me so that I could hardly see to go back to the teacher's desk again. And yet they don't know. The rough school directors don't dream that I'm not exactly in ecstasies even though I'm teaching in their 'deestric't'. And they'll not know either! I turn to God with new eagerness. . . . Just now I took my Bible, and opened it at the passage, 'Like as a father pitieth His children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him'."

CIII. 17.—*But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him.*

The Maréchale de Châtillon, mother of Gaspard de Coligny, repeated this verse on her death-bed. We have the fact on the

authority of Hotman, who was well acquainted with the family. "It is a memorable thing," he says, "that the Maréchale, who had lived such a holy life as to win for herself a high reputation for charity, witnessed on her death-bed to the true and pure religion which she had accepted. She had continually on her lips that passage from the Psalms of David, 'His mercy is from generation to generation upon them that fear Him'. She also exhorted her eldest son, Odet, who was already a Cardinal, expressly forbidding him to bring any priest to her side, for she said that God, in His singular mercy, had opened to her a way by which she might fear and serve Him in all piety, and, forsaking the bonds of this earthly frame, might rise to a dwelling in heaven."¹

CHIL. 20.—*Bless the Lord, ye His angels.*

"Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels: for ye behold Him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle His throne rejoicing; ye in heaven,
On earth join all ye creatures to extol
Him first, Him last, Him midst, and without end."

—MILTON.²

CHIL. 20.—*Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength.*

"The feeling which caused the Psalmist to call on 'the angels which excel in strength' to praise the Lord, one enters into in realizing a great cause for thanksgiving and praise, with which the heart feels its deepest response altogether inadequate and unworthy."³

CIV. 2.—*Who covereth thyself with light as with a garment.*

G. F. Watts said: "If I were ever to make a symbol of the Deity, it would be as a great vesture into which everything that exists is woven". The same idea is expressed in *Faust*.

CIV. 5.—*He laid the foundations of the earth: that it never should move at any time.*

¹ Jules Delaborde, "Gaspard de Coligny," Vol. I, p. 56.

² "Paradise Lost," Book V.

³ J. McLeod Campbell.

This was one of the passages which, according to Father Sanchez, was most strongly relied upon in the controversy with Galileo.¹

CIV. 11.—*The wild asses quench their thirst.*

"The way the Psalmists speak of Nature is very touching," wrote Dr. John Duncan, "and their sympathy with the life of lower creatures: 'The wild asses drink their fill'. It is a grand thing that God appointed such a sentence to be sung in the Christian Churches in all time to come."²

CIV. 23.—*Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.*

In Book IV of "Paradise Lost," Milton describes the coming on of night in Eden:—

"When Adam thus to Eve: 'Fair consort, the hour
Of night, and all things now retired to rest,
Mind us of like repose; since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight, inclines
Our eyelids: other creatures all day long
Rove idle, unemployed, and less need rest.
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways.'"

CIV. 25.—*So is this great and wide sea.*

"And as concerning fish, in that psalm wherein, for height of poetry and wonders, the prophet David seems even to exceed himself; how doth he there express himself in choice metaphors, even to the amazement of a contemplative reader, concerning the sea, the rivers, and the fish therein contained! And the great naturalist, Pliny, says, 'that nature's great and wonderful power is more demonstrated in the sea than on the land'."—
IZAACK WALTON.

CIV. 31.—Dr. John Duncan told a friend that the one thing in the world which made him glad was that the glory of the Lord would endure for ever, that the Lord would rejoice in His works.

¹ "Psalm Mosaics," p. 418.

² "Colloquia Peripatetica."

cv.—The words of Psalm cv., “Call upon His name and declare His wonders among the people,” are inscribed on the pulpit of Richard Baxter at Kidderminster.

cvl. 12, 13.—*They sang His praise. They soon forgot His works.*

Towards the close of his “Journal of the Plague Year” Defoe wrote: “These poor recovering creatures, give them their due, appeared very sensible of their unexpected deliverance; and I should wrong them very much if I should not acknowledge that I believe many of them were really thankful; but I must own that for the generality of the people it might too justly be said of them, as was said of the children of Israel, after their being delivered from the host of Pharaoh, when they passed the Red Sea and looked back, and saw the Egyptians overwhelmed in the water, viz. that ‘*They sang His praise, but they soon forgot His works*’.”

PSALM CVII.

Dr. Duff, on his first voyage to India, in 1830, was wrecked off the coast of South Africa. All reached the shore in safety. Soon after their escape “a sailor, walking along the beach, noticed an object cast ashore. Going up to it, he found it was a quarto copy of Bagster’s Bible and a Scotch Psalm-book, somewhat shattered, but with Mr. Duff’s name distinctly written on both. Taking Bible and Psalter to the hovel where the passengers sought shelter, with a glowing face he presented them to their owner. All were deeply affected by what they regarded as a message from God.” Led by Mr. Duff, they knelt down and he read the traveller’s Psalm, the 107th.¹

cvii. 14.—*He . . . brake their bands asunder.*

Sainte-Beuve tells us that when Mother Agnes, of Port-Royal, heard of the liberation of the Abbé of Saint-Cyran, who had been for several years a prisoner at Vincennes, she desired to communicate the good news to the nuns, but without any infringement of the rule of silence. She entered the refectory, and taking her girdle, unfastened it before the community, thus signifying that God had broken the bonds of His servant. The

¹ Dr. George Smith’s “Life of Dr. Duff”.

meaning of her act was instantly understood by all, for every mind was dwelling on the same thought.¹

CVII. 29.—*He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.*

Dr. William Mair says: "We hardly wonder, deeply as it affects us, when we read that Christians, robust in piety and skilful in the adaptation of choice words of Scripture have even at the moment of their bereavement raised their song of praise in the striking words of Psalm CVII. 29, 30:—

'The storm is chang'd into a calm
At His command and will;
So that the waves, which rag'd before,
Now quiet are and still.
Then are they glad, because at rest,
And quiet now they be:
So to the haven He them brings
Which they desir'd to see.'

When the father of Principal Cairns died (1841) in the midst of his family, his wife gave out these verses and herself led the singing. When the wife of Mr. Lind, United Presbyterian minister, near New Deer, died (1861), he gathered around the dead all that were in the house, and they sang the verses. It is interesting that Carlyle, writing of the death of Cromwell and the grief of Mary, his daughter, thus apostrophizes her: 'Husht, poor weeping Mary! Here is a life-battle nobly done. See'st thou not the storm is changed?' (quoting the verse)."²

CVII. 30.—This text in the Prayer-Book version, "And so He bringeth them unto the haven where they would be," is inscribed on the memorial to Sir John Franklin and his companions, which was erected by Captain McClintock in 1858, near the spot where the explorers passed their first Arctic winter.

CVIII. 2.—*I myself will awake early.*

The decline of early rising is of recent date in London. The Rev. Samuel Bickersteth in his life of his brother, Bishop Edward Bickersteth, of South Tokyo, describes the family customs in

¹ "Port-Royal : Discours Préliminaire."

² "My Life," pp. 30, 31.

Christ Church Vicarage, Hampstead, in the time of their father, afterwards Bishop of Exeter :—

“In the autumn of 1859, Edward (aged nine) went to a dame’s school (Mrs. Smallwood’s), situated in North End, on the farther side of the Heath, and stayed there for two years and more. Each morning he shared his father’s early cup of coffee, and was then accompanied by him across the Heath, which was at that time infested by very rough characters. Father and son, however, went both of them together, and reached the school daily in summer and winter by 7 a.m., at which hour the boy’s work began.”

THE IMPRECATORY PSALMS.

cix.—Principal G. A. Smith says :—

“In the horror with which we shrink from such frank prayers—whose feeling, let us remember at the same time, is as sincere as our recoil from it—we can read the measure of the great change which the teaching and example of Jesus have produced on the ethical instincts of mankind. He has mitigated the virulence of this disease of the human heart : He has altered the moral atmosphere.”¹

cix. 4.—*I give myself unto prayer.*

Dean Burgon says, in his short biography of Richard Lynch Cotton, Provost of Worcester College, Oxford :—

“Few persons probably ever more literally fulfilled the Apostolic precept to ‘pray without ceasing’. He was never known to open a letter without pausing to pray silently first. As each fresh undergraduate entered the hall at the terminal examination called ‘Collections,’ the Provost was observed to be silently offering up a special prayer for that individual. ‘I remember’ (writes one of the society), ‘in the only railway journey I ever made with him, being much impressed by his standing up in the carriage, and offering silent prayer before we started. That was in 1856.’ His servant remarked to one of the family that he had discovered the necessity of giving some intimation of his presence before opening the door of his master’s library; so constantly did he find the Provost on his knees. . . . I will but add for myself that the Provost of Worcester, more than any

¹ “Expositor,” January, 1912.

person I ever knew or read of, seemed to me to illustrate by his own habitual practice that announcement of the author of the 109th Psalm, 'But I give myself unto prayer'. In the original Hebrew it is only this, 'But I—*prayer*,' as if the saint had said, 'But as for me, *I will be all prayer*.'"¹

CIX. 28.—*Let them curse, but bless thou.*

In 1536, while Melanchthon was absent for a few weeks from Wittenberg, Conrad Cordatus attempted to stir up ill-will against him. On returning to the University, the Preceptor, whose mind was full of illustrations from the classics, referred in a letter to his colleague, Caspar Cruciger, to the case of Pericles, who had suffered all day long from the furious attacks of an assailant. The calumniator dared to accompany the statesman to his house, shouting and clamouring against him. Pericles quietly ordered his servant to take a lantern and show the belated citizen to his home in safety.

PSALM CX.

Coleridge declared his belief in the mystical import of this Psalm in relation to the Messiah.

Prof. Edward König believes that the Psalm was actually composed by David after the anointing of Solomon, and with special reference to him.²

Ludlow tells of an interview he had with Cromwell in 1650 :—

"He testified the great value he had for me, Ludlow ; combated my objections to Ireland ; spake somewhat against Lawyers, what a tortuous ungodly jungle English Law was ;—spake of the great Providences of God now abroad on the Earth ; in particular, 'talked for almost an hour upon the Hundred and tenth Psalm'."

Carlyle quotes the Psalm with this comment :—

"Modern readers, not in the case of Ludlow, will find this fact illustrative of Oliver. Before setting out on the Scotch expedition and just on the eve of doing it, we too will read that Psalm of Hebrew David's, which had become English Oliver's ; we will fancy in our minds, not without reflections and emotions, the largest soul in England looking at this God's world with

¹ "Twelve Good Men," Vol. II, p. 78.

² "Expositor," July, 1912, p. 11.

prophet's earnestness through that Hebrew Word—two Divine Phenomena accurately correspondent for Oliver; the one accurately the prophetic symbol and articulate interpretation of the other. As if the Silences had at length found utterance and this was their voice from out of Old Eternity.”¹

cx. 3.—*Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power.*

One of the most painful scenes in the Waverley Novels is that in which Sir Walter Scott describes the torturing of Ephraim Macbriar by order of the Privy Council of Scotland.² When the preparations had been made for the torture of the boot, the President of the Council (the Duke of Lauderdale) “repeated with the same stern voice the question, ‘When and where did you last see John Balfour of Burley?’ The prisoner, instead of replying to him, turned his eyes to heaven as if imploring Divine strength, and muttered a few words, of which the last were distinctly audible: ‘Thou hast said Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power!’”

The torture is continued until the prisoner faints, and the surgeon puts an end to the horror. “‘He is gone,’ said the surgeon—‘he has fainted, my Lords, and human nature can endure no more.’ ‘Release him,’ said the Duke, and added, turning to Dalzell, ‘He will make an old proverb good, for he’ll scarce ride to-day, though he has had his boots on. I suppose we must finish with him?’ ‘Aye, despatch his sentence, and have done with him; we have plenty of drudgery behind.’”

The martyr’s last words in court were these: “‘I forgive you, my Lords, for what you have appointed and I have sustained. And why should I not? Ye send me to a happy exchange—to the company of angels and the spirits of the just, for that of frail dust and ashes. Ye send me from darkness into day—from mortality to immortality—and in a word from earth to heaven! . . . If the thanks, therefore, and pardon of a dying man can do you good, take them at my hand, and may your last moments be as happy as mine!’”

It is noteworthy that the principal actors in this scene,

¹ Oliver Cromwell’s “Letters and Speeches”.

² “Old Mortality,” ch. xxxv.

Lauderdale and Dalzell, are represented by Sir Walter in "Wandering Willie's Tale" ¹ as guests at the banquet in Hell. "But, Lord, take us in keeping, what a set of ghastly revellers they were that sat around the table ! My gudesire kend mony that had long before gane to their place, for often had he piped to the most part in the hall of Redgauntlet. There was the fierce Middleton, and the dissolute Rothes, and the crafty Lauderdale ; and Dalzell, with his bald head and a beard to his girdle, and Earlshall, with Cameron's blude on his hand ; and wild Bonshaw, that tied blessed Mr. Cargill's limbs till the blude sprang."

cx. 7.—*He shall drink of the brook in the way.*

Carlyle wrote to Emerson after a visit to Annandale in 1837 :—

"The gushing of my native brooks, the *sough* of the old solitary woods, the great roar of old native Solway (billowing fresh out of your Atlantic, drawn by the Moon) : all this was a kind of unearthly music to me ; I cannot tell you how unearthly." ²

cxl. 4.—*He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered.*

"It is now more than forty years," wrote Gilbert White of Selborne, "that I have paid some attention to the ornithology of this district, without being able to exhaust the subject ; new occurrences still arise as long as any inquiries are kept alive."

cxl. 10.—*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*

We read of Dean Church that "he seemed to bear about with him a certain hidden, isolating, constraining, and ennobling fear, which quenched the dazzling light of many things that attract most men ; a fear which would have to be clean got rid of before time-serving or unreality could have a chance with him. Whatever that fear was, it told upon his work in many ways, it helped him, probably, in great things to be unworldly, it sustained with an impervious and ever-present sanction his sense and care for perfect justice, in act and word, in his own life and in his verdicts on the past ; and it may well have borne

¹ "Redgauntlet," ch. xi.

² "Correspondence" (1883), Vol. I, p. 139.

part in making his style what it was ; for probably few men have ever written so well and stayed so simply anxious to write truly." ¹

CXII. 4.—*Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.*

"At his noblest John Bright talked a language almost purely Biblical. Take, for example, this sentence from his 1868 speech in Edinburgh : 'The nation is now in power, and if in wisdom abideth power the generation to follow may behold the glorious day of which we, in our time, with our best endeavours, can only hope to see the earliest dawn'. Once in the House he quoted a grand passage from the writings of Penn, showing how all the ages and those who fear God were of one religion, and that they themselves would know it to be so when death had taken off the mask. More than that, he dared to quote the Bible. 'Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.' The effect was electric, strange, altogether indescribable." ²

CXII. 6.—*The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.*

From this text Dean Stanley preached on 25 June, 1871, the Sunday after the funeral of George Grote, the historian. He took as his subject, "The Religious Aspect of History".

He said : "These are simple and familiar words ; but the Chronicler of St. Albans was right in saying that they contain the principle which vindicates and sanctifies all historical research. 'If thou,' he said to his readers, 'if thou forgettest and despisest the departed of past generations, who will remember thee ?' 'It was to keep alive,' so he added, 'the memory of the good and teach us to abhor the bad, that all the sacred historians have striven, from Moses down to the deep-souled chroniclers of the years in which we ourselves are living.'" ³

CXII. 7.—*He shall not be afraid of evil tidings.*

In Defoe's "Due Preparations for the Plague," a pious

¹ "Life and Letters of Dean Church," p. xxii.

² W. Robertson Nicoll, "British Weekly," 29 May, 1913.

³ "Sermons on Special Occasions, preached in Westminster Abbey," p. 153.

mother holds conference with her sons as to the on-coming calamity. She describes the visitation of 1624-5 when many thousand persons died in London :—

“Mother. I cannot look back, child, without horror of mind upon the dreadful time in the year 1625. I was but newly married and settled in the world, and we were full of mirth as you are now, and on a sudden the distemper broke out, and all our smiles were turned into lamentations and tears.

“Son. It came suddenly, it may be, without any warning ?

“Mother. No, no, people had warning too ; but we that were young people then, just as you are now, we would take no notice of it. We were marrying and giving in marriage to the very day that it came upon us ; and when good people spoke to us of repenting and preparing to meet the Lord in His day of wrath, and humbling ourselves under His mighty hand, we thought them, just as you do now, too melancholy and phlegmatic ; that they did not do well to alarm the people, and put families and cities into frights and disorders. And thus we went on.”

At the close of a long conversation the venerable lady sums up her exhortation as follows : “A mind suitably prepared is a mind fortified and made bold to meet the world ; prepared to give up itself into the hands of a merciful Saviour. A heart prepared is the heart the Scripture speaks of when it says, ‘He shall not be afraid of evil tidings, whose heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord’.”

This text is repeated again by Defoe at the close of his work.

Erskine of Linlathen wrote to his sister :—

“Oh ! what a secure peace we should have were we really resting on the Gospel ; but it is just taken by the by, and then it produces no fruit either of holiness or happiness. Let us set to it in earnest, my dear sister, for nothing else will last. Read the sermon of Leighton’s entitled, ‘The Believer and Hero’. The text I think is, ‘He shall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord’. I used to read that sermon very often and always with pleasure.”¹

¹ “Letters of Thomas Erskine,” p. 32.

CXIV. 1.—*When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language.*

In Dante's "Purgatory" the words of this Psalm were heard from "the oarless, sailless, Angel-piloted bark that bore the blessed freight of such souls as, departing in grace, await not on Acheron's but on Tiber's banks the signal for their supreme voyage":—

"Upon the stern stood the Celestial Pilot;
Beatitude seemed written in His face,
And more than a hundred spirits sat within.
'*In exitu Israel de Ægypto!*'
They chanted all together in one voice,
With whatso in the Psalm is after written."

Mr. W. W. Vernon says:—

"These words are the first verse of Psalm CXIV., which in ancient times was sung by the priests while carrying the dead into the Church. Dante, in his letter to Can Grande, comments on this Psalm himself, saying that if we look at the spiritual sense, it typifies the departure of the sanctified soul from the slavery of this corruption in order to pass over to the liberty of eternal glory."

Sainte-Beuve, in his "Port-Royal," says that the songs of the choir were the only luxury of the place, and compares them to the precious ointment with which Mary anointed the feet of the Saviour. "At the death of Mother Agnes, during the funeral office in which her brother, M. Arnauld, was the celebrant, when the choir reached the words *In exitu*, the nuns could not keep back their tears. 'The choir,' we are told, 'failed quite abruptly, and the remainder was sung by the men.'"

PSALM CXV.

This Psalm has been sung by triumphant warriors in the hour of victory. It is associated with the names of John Sobieski, the conqueror of the Turks, and with our own King Henry V, who ordered the English army to sing it on their knees after the battle of Agincourt. Shakespeare puts these words into the lips of the great King who is his ideal of British manhood:—

“O God ! Thy arm was here ;
 And not to us, but to Thy arm alone,
 Ascribe we all. When, without stratagem,
 But in plain shock and even play of battle,
 Was ever known so great and little loss
 On one part and on the other ?—Take it, God,
 For it is none but Thine !

Exeter. 'Tis wonderful !

K. Henry. Come, go we in procession to the village :
 And be it death proclaimed through our host
 To boast of this or take that praise from God
 Which is His only.”

The Russian army, at their triumphant entry into Paris in 1814, wore a medal, on which was inscribed, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give the praise”.¹

In the account of the storming of Bristol sent to Lenthall, Speaker of the Commons, on 14 September, 1645, Cromwell wrote :—

“It may be thought that some praises are due to those gallant men, of whose valour so much mention is made : their humble suit to you and all that have an interest in this blessing is, that in the remembrance of God’s praises they be forgotten. It is their joy that they are instruments of God’s glory and their country’s good. It’s their honour that God vouchsafes to use them. Sir, they that have been employed in this service know that faith and prayer obtained this city for you ; I do not say ours only, but of the people of God with you and all England over, who have wrestled with God for a blessing for this very thing. Our desires are, that God may be glorified by the same spirit of faith by which we ask all our sufficiency and have received it. It is meet that He have all the praise.”

cxv. 1.—When William Blake was dying, he sang Alleluias and songs of joy and triumph, which his wife described as sublime in music and in verse. Mr. Smith describes the last scene as he heard it from the widow : “On the day of his death,” he says, “he composed and uttered songs to his Maker, so sweetly to the ear of his Catherine, that when she stood to hear him, he, look-

¹ “Psalm Mosaics,” p. 456.

ing upon her most affectionately, said, ‘My beloved, they are not mine. No, they are not mine!’ He told her they would not be parted; he should always be about her to take care of her.”

cxv. 4.—*Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands.*

This text is associated with the history of Jean Leclerc, a wool-carder of Meaux, and one of the earliest French Protestant martyrs. Prof. Baird, in his book, “The Rise of the Huguenots of France,” tells us that one of Lefèvre’s French Testaments had fallen into the hands of Leclerc, who was a man of strong courage and invincible resolution. “A bull, issued by Clement the Seventh in connexion with the approaching jubilee, had been posted on the doors of the cathedral (Dec. 1524). It offered indulgence, and enjoined prayers, fasting, and partaking of the Communion, in order to obtain from heaven the restoration of peace between the princes of Christendom. Leclerc secretly tore the bull down, substituting for it a placard in which the Roman pontiff figured as veritable anti-Christ. Diligent search was at once made for the perpetrator of the offence, and for the author of the subsequent mutilation of the prayers to the Virgin hung up in various parts of the same edifice.” . . . Leclerc was discovered and taken to Paris for trial. The barbarous sentence was that he be whipped in Paris by the common executioner on three successive days, then transferred to Meaux to receive the like punishment, and finally branded on the forehead with a red-hot iron, before being banished for ever from the kingdom. The cruel prescription was carried out to the letter. . . . As the iron was leaving on Leclerc’s brow the ignominious imprint of the fleur-de-lis a single voice suddenly broke in upon the silence. It was that of his aged mother, who after an involuntary cry of anguish, quickly recovered herself and shouted, “Hail, Jesus Christ and His standard-bearers”.

Jean Leclerc went to Metz and there was sentenced to a cruel death for the crime of throwing down sacred images. The day of his execution was 22 July, 1525. The sentence provided that, among other tortures, his head should be encircled with a red-hot band of iron before his body was committed to the flames. “As the fervent metal slowly ate its way toward his very brain, the bystanders with amazement heard the dying man

calmly repeat the words of Holy Writ : ' Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands '. He had not completed the Psalmist's terrific denunciation of the crime and folly of image-worship when his voice was stifled by the fire and smoke of the pyre into which his impatient tormentors had hastily thrown him."¹

cxv. 4-8.—Theodoret tells us of St. Publea, the aged Abbess of a company of nuns at Antioch, who used to chant, as Julian went by in idolatrous procession, the Psalm, " Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. . . . They that make them are like unto them, and so are all such as put their trust in them." And he narrates how the angry Emperor caused his soldiers to buffet her till she bled, unable as he was to endure the sting of the old Hebrew song.²

PSALM CXVI.

cxvi. 1.—*I love the Lord.*

" Doth David, after an imperfect deliverance, sing forth his love : ' I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and supplications '. What think you he will do eternally ? And how will he love the Lord, who hath lifted him up to that glory ! Doth he cry out, ' Oh, how I love Thy law ! ' ' My delight is in the saints on earth, and the excellent.' How will he say then, ' Oh, how I love the Lord, and the King of saints, in whom is all my delight ! ' Christians, doth it now stir up your love to remember all the experiences of His love ; to look back upon a life of mercies ; doth not kindness melt you ; and the sunshine of Divine goodness melt your frozen hearts ? what will it do then, when you shall live in love and have all in Him who is all ? Oh, the bright delights of love, of this love ! The content that the heart findeth in it ; the satisfaction it brings along with it ! Surely love is both work and wages."—RICHARD BAXTER.

cxvi. 2. (Scottish Metrical Version).

Dr. McLeod Campbell wrote after a visit in 1862 to Mr. Erskine of Linlathen :—

" He was looking forward to a visit from Jowett. How different from the difficulty of the path of life to ordinary men is

¹ H. M. Baird, " The Rise of the Huguenots," Vol. I, pp. 87-89.

² J. M. Neale, " Commentary on the Psalms ".

its difficulty to deep-thinking men ! and yet how truly do the words ‘ Abide in Me,’ ‘ This is the victory, even our faith,’ cover both cases, and direct to what meets our real need, whichever be our case ! I was struck to mark how much after all his thinking, and free, open, honest thinking, dear Mr. Erskine’s firmest hold was manifestly experimental, and what the words of the Psalm express :—

‘ I while I live will call on Him
Who bowed to me His ear ’.”¹

CXVI. 12.—*What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me ?*

Archbishop Maclagan wrote as old age was advancing : “ I enter my seventy-eighth year. How wonderfully God has blessed me through all the changing scenes of life. I have had my trials and my sorrows—some of them very heavy and very dark—times of sickness and loneliness from which I hardly thought to return to health or happiness ; but out of them all the Lord delivered me, and has brought me to this hour. How often and how woefully have I failed to keep Him in remembrance or to walk worthy of my high calling ! And yet He has borne with me in all my faithlessness and feebleness, and heaped His blessings upon me. *Quid retribuam ?* ‘ Nothing in my hand I bring—simply to Thy cross I cling ’.”²

CXVI. 15.—*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.*

Bishop Burnet writes of the last moments of our good Queen Mary II, wife of William of Orange :—

“ She was then upon the Wing. Such was her Peace that she hardly felt any uneasiness from symptoms. We first thought that the ease was from her mind, then, when she said she felt well inwardly, we felt it was a particular blessing.”

PSALM CXVIII.

CXVIII.—Luther said : “ This is *my* Psalm which I love, for it has served me well, and has helped me out of troubles when Emperors, Kings, wise men, and saints could not have helped me.

¹ “ Memorials,” Vol. II, p. 23.

² F. D. How, “ Life of Archbishop Maclagan,” pp. 388, 389.

It is dearer to me than the honour, wealth, and power held by the Pope, the Turk, the Emperor, and all the world.”¹

At the hour when the censure of the Sorbonne was pronounced on the writings of Antoine Arnauld, he was walking and praying in a gallery at Port-Royal. Suddenly these words of Augustine’s commentary on the 118th Psalm occurred to his mind and at once strengthened and soothed him: “Since they have persecuted only the truth in me, help me, O Lord, that I may strive for the truth, even unto death.”²

When William, Prince of Orange, landed at Torbay, public worship was held in Brixham. “Carstairs was the first, Scotsman and Presbyterian as he was, to call down the blessings of heaven on the expedition; and after his prayer, the troops all along the beach, at his instance, joined in the 118th Psalm, and this act of devotion produced a sensible effect on the troops. The Prince for a while seemed elated, yet soon relapsed into his habitual gravity; but Burnet only interpreted the general feeling of the moment when he says: “We saw new and unthought of characters of a favourable providence of God watching over us.”³

CXVIII. 17.—*I shall not die, but live.*

When Luther was living at the fortress of Coburg, he wrote this verse in Latin on the wall of his room, with musical notation. Twenty years later Dr. Ratzeberger saw the words and music, and copied them. Luther dedicated his interpretation of the Psalm to the Abbot Frederick Pistorius at Nuremberg, and sent it about the end of June, 1530, to be printed at Wittenberg.⁴

When Melanchthon was recovering from his illness at Weimar in 1540, he saw, as he told Camerarius five years later, this verse written on the wall, and rejoiced at the good omen. A remark made in his last illness (1560) suggests that he had seen the words in sleep.⁵

¹ Köstlin-Kawerau, Vol. II, p. 200.

² C. Beard, “Port-Royal,” Vol. I, p. 257.

³ Dr. Stoughton, “History of Religion in England,” Vol. V, p. 30.

⁴ Köstlin-Kawerau, Vol. II, p. 201.

⁵ See the late Prof. N. Müller’s annotated edition of the old narratives, published in 1910 under the title: “Philipp Melanchthons letzte Lebens-tage, Heimgang und Bestattung,” p. 63.

Dean Pigou tells the following story of the early days of William Dalrymple Maclagan, afterwards Archbishop of York :—

“He told me that on his way home, invalided from India, as he lay in his berth he resolved that, should God be pleased to restore him to health, he would take Holy Orders. Reading the Psalms for the day, fresh in his resolve, the following verses arrested his attention and came as a message straight from God : ‘I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened and corrected me, but He hath not given me over unto death.’ ”¹

The Bishop of Norwich, when speaking in May, 1913, at the annual meeting of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, referred to his experiences during a recent severe illness. He said that when he was lying helpless on his bed, and the doctors thought he would not recover, the message that was given to him was this : “I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord”. He had realized as never before the abiding presence of God and the unfailing love of Christ.

CXVIII. 24.—*This is the day which the Lord hath made : we will rejoice and be glad in it.*

When the Jesuit martyr Campion and his companions were sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, Campion broke forth into the hymn of praise “Te Deum laudamus” and Sherwin took up the words of this Psalm in Latin : “This is the day which the Lord hath made : we will rejoice and be glad in it”. The rest expressed their happiness in other texts of Scripture.²

PSALM CXIX.

CXIX.—The longest Psalm is a very difficult Psalm to learn by heart, and the story of Ruskin’s marvellous achievement in repeating it on the eve of his third birthday must be accepted with reserve. It is a fact fairly well attested that at the age of nine David Livingstone gained a New Testament from his Sunday-school teacher for reciting the Psalm on two successive

¹ F. D. How, “Life of Archbishop Maclagan,” p. 22.

² Simpson’s “Life of Edmund Campion”.

evenings with only five errors. Such a task would not now be demanded from any child, and grown-up people who pride themselves on the exactness of their verbal memory will be humbled if they test their faculty on these 176 verses. Understanding of the whole Psalm, rather than mnemonic exactness in its word-scheme is the characteristic of its genuine lovers. Pascal, we are told, could never speak of it without rapturous admiration. He singled out verse 59 as the turning-point of man's character and destinies: "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies". One interpreter speaks of "the long colourless distances of the 119th Psalm," as if we were entering here on the Fenland of the Bible. If it were so, the flat spaces are broken up by Cathedral splendours like those of Ely and Peterborough, and the light glows on the figures of unknown saints, like the nameless knights and bishops who rise before us on the ruined front of Crowland Abbey.

Among authors of our own day who have written with sincere admiration of this Psalm, the name of the brilliant essayist, Mr. A. C. Benson, should be recorded. In his view the writer was a young and wealthy man.

In choosing illustrations, we have added a few examples from personal reading to the already vast literature of the Psalm.

CXIX. 19.—*I am a stranger upon earth: O hide not Thy commandments from me* (with Ps. xxxix. 14.—*For I am a stranger with Thee: and a sojourner, as all my fathers were*) (Prayer-Book Version).

St. Philip, the martyred Metropolitan of Russia, came into conflict with Ivan the Terrible and denounced the cruelties of that monarch. "It is a true glory of the Russian Church," says Dean Stanley,¹ "that its one martyred prelate should have suffered, not for any high ecclesiastical pretensions, but in the simple cause of justice and mercy. 'Silence,' he said as he rebuked the Czar, 'lays sin upon the soul, and brings death to the whole people. I am a stranger and a pilgrim upon earth, as all my fathers were, and I am ready to suffer for the truth. Where would my faith be if I kept silence? Here we are offering up the bloodless sacrifice to the Lord; while behind the

¹ "History of the Eastern Church."

altar flows the innocent blood of Christian men.' As he was dragged away from the Cathedral, his one word was 'Pray'. As he received his executioners in the narrow cell of his prison in the convent of Twer, his one word was 'Perform thy mission'. That narrow cell, now locked up and almost forgotten, is more truly deserving the name of 'the martyrdom,' than the spot where our English primate [Becket] fell."

CXIX. 20.—Dr. Chalmers said that the spirit of his life was expressed by the words of the Psalmist, "My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto Thy judgments at all times".

CXIX. 25.—*My soul cleaveth unto the dust.*

When Dante, in the "Purgatorio," enters on the Terrace of Avarice, he finds the penitents lying face downward on the earth, repeating with such deep sighs that he could hardly make out the words, the Vulgate of Psalm cxix. 25, "*Adhaesit pavimento anima mea*" ("My soul cleaveth unto the dust").

"The penalty," says Dr. Carroll, "is simply the natural and inevitable recoil of Avarice upon the moral nature. The sin consists essentially in the cleaving of the soul to the dust, a deliberate preference and choice of the earth before God. . . . In short, the punishment is simply the fulfilling of Christ's words: 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also'. They laid up their treasure on earth, and now on that same earth they themselves are laid face downwards, their hearts beating sadly enough against the dust they loved too well."¹

When the Emperor Theodosius did penance for the massacre at Thessalonica "he entered the church with a deep sigh of relief, and fell prostrate on the floor, smiting his breast and crying, 'my soul cleaveth unto the dust: O quicken Thou me according to Thy word'; and with every sign of the profoundest compunction he besought and received absolution and re-admission to the Communion of the Church. To the day of his death he never ceased to deplore his error, and was so watchful over himself and so careful not to offend, that the more he was irritated the more ready he was to pardon; and offenders were said not to fear, but to wish to see him angry."²

¹ "Prisoners of Hope," pp. 257, 258.

² "The Fathers for English Readers; St. Ambrose," p. 70.

Cardinal Vaughan wrote a few weeks before his ordination to the priesthood :—

"I long to be able to do some heroic work. I have longed for this these last two years, and nothing has presented itself wherein I could sacrifice myself for God. I wish I could devote myself in some way to God. I belong to Him. I daily tell Him at the altar that I am devoted to Him, that I am His servant, that He must employ me. But I am dull and an ass, and I do nothing but support badly and impatiently ill-health, irritable feelings, weariness, and disgust, and the ordinary trials of a student's life."¹

"When the Psalmist in profound religious humiliation exclaimed, 'My soul cleaves unto the dust,' he reached a truth at which the world seems to arrive but slowly, though it is declared by our everyday experience, and confirmed by all deep and patient philosophical inquiry."—DORA GREENWELL.²

CXIX. 37.—*Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.*

When Christian and Faithful were passing through Vanity Fair, "that which did not a little amuse the merchandisers was that these pilgrims set very light by all their wares; they cared not so much as to look upon them; and if they called upon them to buy, they would put their fingers in their ears and cry, 'Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity,' and look upwards, signifying that their trade and traffic was in heaven."

CXIX. 37-48.—This section of the Psalm was chosen by President Woodrow Wilson as his selected passage when he kissed the Bible on taking the oath of office.

CXIX. 45.—*I will walk at liberty: for I seek Thy precepts.*

On this verse Bishop Phillips Brooks wrote in his notebook :—

"The liberty of law, Eden; the passage out of it, a passage into slavery. True liberty is harmony. The slavery of self-consciousness that comes with sin. That is the tree of knowledge. David, so free in his goodness, so cowardly in his sin. Sympathy with a law well kept, that is the best freedom."

CXIX. 54.—*Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.*

¹ J. G. Snead-Cox, "Life of Cardinal Vaughan," Vol. I, p. 55.

² "Liber Humanitatis," p. 5.

He whose name was Secret gave to Christiana a letter from her husband's King which "smelt after the manner of the best perfume" and was written in letters of gold.

"I advise thee," he said, "that thou put this letter in thy bosom, that thou read therein to thyself and to thy children, until they have got it by heart, for it is one of the songs that thou must sing while thou art in this house of thy pilgrimage; also this thou must deliver in at the far gate."—BUNYAN.

CXIX. 62.—*At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto Thee because of Thy righteous judgments.*

It was the regular custom of George Schwartzerd, the devout father of Philip Melancthon, to rise at midnight for prayer. The old saying "Prayers hinder no work" was fulfilled in his experience, for he was acknowledged to be the most skilful armourer of his time in Germany, and he worked for the Emperor Maximilian, the Elector Palatine, and many other princes and nobles. He was as highly honoured by the great of his day as Sir Walter Scott's brave armourer in "The Fair Maid of Perth".

Dr. Stoughton tells us that John Williams, Archbishop of York, who ended his strange and chequered career in 1650, was accustomed, during the last year of his life, to rise out of bed regularly at midnight for one quarter of an hour, when he knelt on his bare knees, and prayed earnestly, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and put an end to these days of shame and misery".

A picture of the wakeful soul at midnight is given by John Donne in his "Obsequies of the Lord Harrington":—

"Thou seest me here at midnight; now all rest;
Times dead-low water, when all minds divest
To-morrow's business; when the labourers have
Such rest in bed, that their last churchyard grave,
Subject to change, will scarce be a type of this;
Now, when the client, whose last hearing is
To-morrow, sleeps; when the condemned man,
Who, when he opes his eyes, must shut them then
Again by death, although sad watch he keep,
Doth practice dying by a little sleep;

Thou at this midnight seest me, and as soon
 As that sun rises to me, midnight's noon,
 All the world grows transparent, and I see
 Through all, both church and state, in seeing thee ;
 And I discern by favour of this light,
 Myself, the hardest object of the sight.
 God is the glass ; as thou, when thou dost see
 Him Who sees all, seest all concerning thee ;
 So, yet unglorified, I comprehend
 All, in these mirrors of thy ways and end."

CXIX. 71.—*It is good for me that I have been afflicted ; that I might learn Thy statutes.*

"You have suffered long and greatly," said Bishop Bagot of Oxford to a distinguished statesman whom he was visiting on his death-bed. "Yes," was the answer, "but knowing what I know now, I would not, for all that this world can give, have been spared one hour or one pang of my illness." ¹

Sir Walter Scott says in "The Monastery :—"²

"There are those to whom a sense of religion has come in storm and tempest ; there are those whom it has summoned amid scenes of revelry and idle vanity ; there are those, too, who have heard its 'still small voice' amid rural leisure and placid contentment. But perhaps the knowledge which causeth not to err, is most frequently impressed upon the mind during seasons of affliction ; and tears are the softened showers which cause the seed of Heaven to spring and take root in the human breast. At least it was thus with Mary Avenel. She was insensible to the discordant noise which rang below, the clang of bars and the jarring symphony of the levers which they used to force them, the measured shouts of the labouring inmates as they combined their strength for each heave, and gave time with their voices to the exertion of their arms, and their deeply muttered vows of revenge on the fugitives who had bequeathed them at their departure a task so toilsome and difficult. Not all this din, combined in hideous concert, and expressive of aught but peace, love, and forgiveness, could divert Mary Avenel from the new course of study on which she had so singularly entered.

¹ Quoted by Canon Liddon.

² Ch. xxx.

‘The serenity of Heaven,’ she said, ‘is above me; the sounds which are around are but those of earth and earthly passion.’”

CXIX. 97.—The words “I have loved Thy Law: O Lord, all the day it is my meditation” were chosen by Archdeacon Palmer for the tablet erected in Holywell Cemetery, Oxford, as a memorial to Dean Burgon, a great Bible-lover.¹

CXIX. 105.—*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

In the old Syrian “Hymn of the Soul,” the Prince who has gone to Egypt in quest of the serpent-guarded pearl, and has been poisoned by the dainties of the country, receives from his father a winged letter, sealed with the king’s own seal, which recalls him to his task.

“Then I seized the Pearl and homewards started to journey,
Leaving the unclean garb I had worn in Egypt behind me;
Straight for the East I set my course, to the light of the home-
land,

And on the way in front I found the letter that roused me—
Once it awakened me, now it became a Light to my pathway.

For with its silken folds it shone on the road I must travel,
And with its voice and leading cheered my hurrying footsteps,
Drawing me on in love across the perilous passage,
Till I had left the land of Babylon safely behind me
And I had reached Maishan, the sea-washed haven of mer-
chants.”²

CXIX. 124.—*Deal with Thy servant according unto Thy mercy, and teach me Thy statutes.*

This verse closes the first paragraph of the “*Leges Academiæ Witenbergensis*” which were drawn up by Melancthon. He reminded the students of Wittenberg University that in every grade of life our first concern ought to be, “Does this new mode of life on which I am entering please God? Can I ask His help in my daily course?” There can be no doubt, he added, that the Divine purpose requires the preservation of that doctrine in which God reveals Himself and by which He calls and gathers the eternal Church. But without human learning this holy

¹ “Life of Dean Burgon, Vol. II, p. 337.

² Prof. F. C. Burkitt, “Early Eastern Christianity,” p. 221.

doctrine cannot be kept alive. The students must therefore understand that the discipline of acquiring knowledge is pleasing to God, and the prayer recommended to them for constant use is : "Fac cum servo tuo secundum misericordiam tuam, et justificationes tuas doce me".¹

CXIX. 130.—*The entrance of Thy words giveth light.*

Frederic Shields wrote in 1909 to Mr. Charles Rowley :—

" 'The entrance of Thy words giveth light' ; and those who glory in their acquaintance with the discoveries of modern science, and with literature, art, music, and every sensuous pleasure, are feeding on husks, like the prodigal, if their souls are estranged from God our Father, and from the True Light of man, Jesus Christ." ²

CXIX. 134.—*Deliver me from the oppression of man : so will I keep Thy precepts.*

Cromwell wrote from Linlithgow on 21 July, 1651, to Speaker Lenthall :—

"I hope it becometh me to pray, that we may walk humbly and self-denyingly before the Lord, and believingly also. That you whom we serve, as the authority over us, may do the work committed to you, with uprightness and faithfulness—and thoroughly, as to the Lord. That you may not suffer anything to remain that offends the eyes of His jealousy. That common weal may more and more be sought, and justice done impartially. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro ; and as He finds out His enemies here, to be avenged on them, so will He not spare them for whom He doth good, if by His loving-kindness they become not good. I shall take the humble boldness to represent this Engagement of David's, in the Hundred and nineteenth Psalm, verse Hundred and thirty-fourth, 'Deliver me from the oppression of man, so will I keep Thy precepts'." ³

CXIX. 148.—*Mine eyes prevent the night watches.*

When Mère Angélique Arnauld was dying, "She compelled herself to eat, but could not, as she said, compel herself to sleep," and so passed almost every night in writing letters, and in other active occupations, suggested by the perils of her community.

¹ "Corp. Ref.," Vol. X, col. 992.

² "Life and Letters of Frederic Shields," p. 344.

³ "Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell."

CXIX. 176.—*I have gone astray like a lost sheep.*

Mr. A. C. Benson writes : "The saving thing is to feel like the Psalmist, 'I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost'. As soon as one realizes that, one is on the right track ; because not only does one know that one is seeking something, but one becomes aware of a much larger fact, that one is being sought by some one else, who is sure to find one ; sought, not as a dog may trace a wounded creature through the grass, and lose the scent at last, but sought patiently and faithfully, just as when a mother guards with outstretched arms a child which proudly thinks it is walking alone. It is peace after all that we desire, not happiness ; and the things that spoil happiness need not trouble peace at all.¹

SONGS OF ASCENTS.

PSALMS CXX.—CXXXIV.

The early New England settlers built their churches on highly elevated sites. "The meeting-house," says Alice Morse Earle, "was at first a watch-house, from which to keep vigilant lookout for any possible approach of hostile or sneaking Indians ; it was also a landmark, whose high bell-turret, or steeple . . . could be seen for miles around by travellers journeying through the woods, or in the narrow tree-obscured paths which were then almost the only roads. In seaside towns it could be a mark for sailors at sea ; such was the Truro meeting-house." The second Roxbury church was set on a high hill, and as the aged John Eliot, the glory of New England Puritanism, toiled patiently up the long ascent to his dearly loved meeting, he said to the person on whose arm he leaned, "This is very like the way to heaven, it is uphill. The Lord by His grace fetch us up."²

CXX. 5.—*Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar !*

Carlyle notes that "old Mr. Rouse of Truro and the Presbyterian populations still sing" in the northern kirks :—

¹ "Church Family Newspaper," 24 February, 1911.

² "The Sabbath in Puritan New England," p. 5.

“Woe’s me that I in Meshec am
A sojourner so long,
Or that I in the tents do dwell
To Kedar that belong.”

PSALM CXXI.

David Livingstone bade farewell to his father for the last time in November, 1840. His sister describes the closing hours at home. “I remember my father and him talking over the prospects of Christian missions. They agreed that the time would come when rich men and great men would think it an honour to support whole stations of missionaries, instead of spending their money on hounds and horses. On the morning of 17 November, we got up at five o’clock. My mother made coffee. David read the 121st and 135th Psalms, and prayed. My father and he walked to Glasgow to catch the Liverpool steamer. ‘On the Broomielaw,’ says Dr. Blaikie, ‘father and son looked for the last time on earth on each others’ faces. The old man walked slowly back to Blantyre, with a lonely heart, no doubt, yet praising God.’”

The biographer of Bishop Hannington says that every morning during his last hard-fought journey he greeted the sunrise with his “travelling Psalm,” “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help”.¹

Ruskin considered that his visit to the hills after long months in Italy was a turning-point in his life.

“I woke,” he wrote, “from a sound tired sleep in a little one-windowed room at Lans-le-bourg, at six of the summer morning, 2 June, 1841; the red aiguilles on the north relieved against pure blue—the great pyramid of snow down the valley in one sheet of eastern light. I dressed in three minutes, ran down the village street, across the stream, and climbed the grassy slope on the south side of the valley, up to the first pines. I had found my life again; all the best of it. What good of religion, love, admiration, or hope had ever been taught me, or felt by my best nature, rekindled at once; and my line of work, both by my own will and the aid granted to it by fate in the future

¹ E. C. Dawson, “James Hannington,” p. 443.

was determined for me. I went down thankfully to my father and mother, and told them I was sure I should get well."

Sir E. T. Cook remarks on this passage: "Ruskin might have said very literally with the Psalmist, 'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, whence cometh my help'." ¹

CXXI. 4.—*Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.*

The belt which encircles the Kaaba at Mecca is about two and a half feet deep; it is of the same material as the cover, with what is called the Throne verse, from the Koran, heavily embroidered on it in gold: "God, there is no God but He; the Living, the Eternal; nor slumber seizeth Him nor sleep; His whatsoever is in the heavens, and whatsoever is in the earth. . . . His Throne reacheth over the heavens and the earth, and the upholding of both burdeneth him not, and He is the high, the great." ²

CXXI. 8.—*The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and even for evermore.*

The text of Bishop Selwyn's farewell sermon at Cambridge to the Delhi missionaries (22 Oct. 1877).

Writing a year later to the Rev. R. Bullock, from Faredabad, sixteen miles south of Delhi, Edward Bickersteth said: "I cannot close this letter without a reference to the loss which we feel the Cambridge Mission has sustained in the death of Bishop Selwyn. To have been allowed to listen to his strong and loving words of counsel in leaving Cambridge was a singular privilege. I have very often thought of his parting good-bye, 'The Lord preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, for evermore'." ³

Frances, Baroness Bunsen, wrote from Rome to her husband during his winter's absence in Germany in 1827-8:—

"Of *your* long-delayed return I can say nothing more than what I daily pray, God grant a good issue! God bless your going out and coming in! Heaven knows of your *coming in* we feel a great need, but I see we shall have much longer to wait." ⁴

¹ "The Life of Ruskin," Vol. I, p. 120.

² S. H. Leeder, "Veiled Mysteries of Egypt," p. 200.

³ "Life and Letters of Edward Bickersteth," p. 44.

⁴ "Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen," Vol. I, p. 302.

CXXIII.—James Gilmour of Mongolia wrote in 1890 :—

"I know you pray for us here. Eh, man ! if the thing would move, if the rain would come ! 'As the eyes of servants, etc.' (Ps. CXXIII., CXXVI.). I often read these Psalms together. And then I think what would please me best as a master would be to see my servant going ahead, energetically, and faithfully, and loyally with his work, not moping about downcast. Then is not this what God wants in us ? So here goes, cheerily and trustfully."

CXXIII. 2.—*Our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that He have mercy upon us.*

"Very likely," wrote Coventry Patmore, "you may have to pray for years before you get any *perceptible* gain in humility or anything else ; but the gain is always secretly going on, and you will find, as God promises in the Psalms, that your apparently all-powerful enemies shall be 'suddenly' slain. There is nothing more pleasing in God's sight than for one to fight on for ever, in spite of incessant apparent defeat. 'Wait upon God until He have mercy upon you.'"¹

CXXIV. 7.—*Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers ; the snare is broken, and we are escaped.*

Gilbert White in "The Natural History of Selborne" gives a description of Wolmer Pond. "On the face of this expanse of waters," he says, "and perfectly secure from fowlers, lie all day long, in the winter season, vast flocks of ducks, teals, and wigeons, of various denominations ; where they preen and solace and rest themselves till towards sunset, when they issue forth in little parties (for in their natural state they are all birds of the night) to feed in the brooks and meadows ; returning again with the dawn of morning."

PSALM CXXVI.

CXXVI. 1.—*When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.*

Jeremy Taylor tells us that in his book "The Great Exemplar" he had tried "to put a portion of the holy fire into a repository, which might help to re-kindle the incense, when it

¹ "Memoirs of Coventry Patmore," Vol. II, p. 89.

shall please God religion shall return, and all His servants sing
 ‘In convertendo captivitatem Sion’ with a voice of eucharist.”

The Independent Church of Neuchâtel celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary on 31 October, 1898. The venerable Frédéric Godet, then aged eighty-seven, who had been one of the founders of the Church, gave a brief address from Psalm cxxvi. :
 “When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like unto men that dream,” etc. This small body, which began its work in 1873 with a handful of adherents, numbered thousands of members when a quarter of a century had passed, and had actually sent over thirty missionaries to the heathen.¹

CXXVI. 6.—*He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

When Lady Castlewood, in Thackeray’s great novel, welcomes Harry Esmond home after the wanderings on which she herself had banished him, she quotes from this Psalm as they return from afternoon service in Winchester Cathedral. Harry had joined his mistress and her son at Evensong in the ancient solemn edifice on 29 December, and he returns with them to Walcote House.

“They walked as though they had never been parted, slowly, with the grey twilight closing round them.

“‘And now we are drawing near to home,’ she continued, ‘I knew you would come, Harry, if—if it was but to forgive me for having spoken unjustly to you after that horrid—horrid misfortune. I was half frantic with grief then when I saw you. And I know now—they have told me—that wretch, whose name I can never mention, even has said it: how you tried to avert the quarrel, and would have taken it on yourself, my poor child. But it was God’s will that I should be punished, and that my dear lord should fall.’

“‘He gave me his blessing on his death-bed,’ Esmond said. ‘Thank God for that legacy!’

“‘Amen, amen! dear Henry,’ says the lady, pressing his arm. ‘I knew it. Mr. Atterbury, of St. Bride’s, who was called to him, told me so. And I thanked God, too, and in my prayers ever since remembered it.’

¹ “Life of Frédéric Godet,” p. 540.

“ ‘ You had spared me many a bitter night had you told me sooner,’ Mr. Esmond said.

“ ‘ I know it, I know it,’ she answered, in a tone of such sweet humility as made Esmond repent that he should ever have dared to reproach her. ‘ I know how wicked my heart has been ; and I have suffered too, my dear. I confessed to Mr. Atterbury—I must not tell any more. He—I said I would not write to you or go to you—and it was better even that, having parted, we should part. But I knew you would come back ; I own that. That is no one’s fault. And to-day, Henry, in the anthem, when they sang it, “ When the Lord turned the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream,” I thought, yes, like them that dream—them that dream. And then it went, “ They that sow in tears shall reap in joy ; and he that goeth forth and weepeth, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him” ; I looked up from the book, and saw you. I was not surprised when I saw you. I knew you would come, my dear, and saw the gold sunshine round your head.’

“ She smiled an almost wild smile as she looked up at him. The moon was up by this time, glittering keen in the frosty sky. He could see, for the first time now clearly, her sweet, careworn face.

“ ‘ Do you know what day it is ? ’ she continued. ‘ It is the 29th of December—it is your birthday ! But last year we did not drink it—no, no. My lord was cold, and my Harry was likely to die ; and my brain was in a fever ; and we had no wine. But now—now you are come again, bringing your sheaves with you, my dear.’ She burst into a wild flood of weeping as she spoke ; she laughed and sobbed on the young man’s heart, crying out wildly, ‘ Bringing your sheaves with you—your sheaves with you ! ’ ”

Dr. Marcus Dods wrote to a friend :—

“ The world is unintelligible except on the hypothesis that it is for our schooling, and that he that sows in tears is the likeliest to have sheaves worth gathering. It is truly a *death* we must pass through, a quitting of our hold on all that once seemed life to us. And it comes to each in turn as so hard and impossible a thing, that we naturally think no one could have so hard a lot as ours.”

CXXVII.—Cardinal Vaughan wrote at the age of twenty-one :—

“Nisi Dominus aedificaverit domum, in vanum laboraverunt qui aedificant eam.” “O Lord, I beseech Thee, build, build me up into a house, safe and strong; let my soul be a house where You may live, build You it up—and let me be a house which is lighted up for those poor souls whom You have redeemed, that they may see it like the city placed upon a hill.”

CXXVII. 2.—*He giveth His beloved sleep.*

James Vaughan of Brighton tells an oft-repeated story of Frederick the Great in one of his sermons to children :—

“One day the king of Prussia rang his bell; nobody answered; the king went into the next room, the ante-room, where he saw the boy, his page, who ought to have answered the bell, asleep. The king looked at him, and saw hanging out of his pocket a little bit of paper which he examined. I do not know whether the king did quite right—I do not think he ought to have done so, though he was king. What was it about? It was a letter from his mother, and it ran something like this: ‘My dear boy—I am very much obliged to you for the money you have sent me. God will bless you for it.’ The king did not wake the page, but went back to his own room, and took out a rouleau of ducats of gold, and put it into the page’s pocket while he slept. He then went back to his room, and rang the bell very violently indeed. The page came in rubbing his eyes, and looking very frightened. The king said—‘You have been asleep!’ The boy fumbled in his pockets, because he got so nervous; and then he felt the roll of ducats. He burst out crying. The king said, ‘What is the matter?’ The page replied, ‘O please, your majesty, I have got an enemy. Somebody has been putting money into my pocket. I never put it there.’ And the king said, ‘Take it, my boy’. And then he used a German proverb—‘God gives to people in their sleep’. I must just tell you that in the 127th Psalm, where we have it translated—‘So He giveth His beloved sleep,’ in the original it reads, ‘God gives to His beloved *while they are sleeping*’. ‘Take the money,’ said the king; ‘keep part of it yourself, and send the rest to your mother, and tell her I will always be your friend and hers.’”

QUIET NIGHTS.

“ Unmindful of my low desert
 Who turn e'en blessings to my hurt,
 God sends me graces o'er and o'er
 More than the sands on the seashore.

Among the blessings He doth give
 My starveling soul that she may live,
 I praise Him for my nights He kept
 And all the quiet sleep I slept.

Among the gifts of His mercy,
 More than the leaves upon the tree,
 The sands upon the shore, I keep
 And name my lovely nights of sleep.”

KATHARINE TYNAN.

CXXIX. 1.—*Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say.*

From this text the Cardinal Charles of Lorraine preached the funeral sermon at Rheims for King Charles IX of France. Dwelling on the words “Saepe expugnauerunt” he recalled the many troubles of the reign. He mentioned that at the Coronation in 1561 the ten-year-old king had complained that the crown was too heavy for him.

PSALM CXXX.

The year 1738 was a critical period in the spiritual history of John Wesley. Dr. Stoughton says:—

“At a fellowship meeting held in Aldersgate Street, in connexion with a church of England Society, as some one was reading Luther on the Galatians, a new light dawned on Wesley's soul, though he had been prepared for it by the teaching of his Moravian friend Peter Böhler; and it is interesting to notice a service he attended in St. Paul's Cathedral, the very afternoon of the same day—when he heard the anthem—‘Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice. O let Thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss,

O Lord, who may abide it? For there is mercy with Thee, therefore shalt Thou be feared.' 'O Israel, trust in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his sins.' The words harmonized with his feelings, and prepared him for what he embraced a few hours afterwards. The Cathedral of St. Paul's thus becomes connected with Wesley's 'conversion,' and with the origin of Methodism."

The Psalm "De profundis clamavi," was sung by the monks of Kennaquhair, in "The Monastery," as they waited in the market-place of the village, under their Abbot Eustace, for the approach of the hostile troops under Murray and Morton.

CXXX. 3.—*If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?*

Charles Kingsley wrote in 1862 to Frederic Shields the artist:—

"The plain fact is, God has given you a great talent, whereby you may get an honest livelihood. Take that as God's call to you, and follow it out. As for the sins of youth, what says the 130th Psalm? 'If Thou, Lord, were extreme to mark what is done amiss, who could abide it?' But there is mercy with Him, therefore shall He be feared. And how to fear God I know not better than by working in the speciality which He has given us, trusting to Him to make it of use to His creatures—if He needs us, and if He does not, perhaps so much the better for us."¹

CXXX. 6.—*My soul fleeth unto the Lord, before the morning watch* (Prayer-Book Version).

When Bishop Selwyn lay dying on Tuesday, 9 April, 1878, his friend Bishop Abraham came to visit him at six o'clock in the morning. The curtains in his bedroom were still drawn, and the light of day was streaming into the room through the openings. Psalm cxxx. had just been read, and when the words "My soul fleeth to Thee before the morning watch" were uttered, the dying man added, in tones almost startling from their distinctness, "I say, before the morning watch". "All were struck," says his biographer, "with the strong feeling of thankfulness to

¹ "Life and Letters of Frederic Shields," p. 71.

God which he felt for the sufferings through which he had been carried." ¹

CXXXI. 1.—*Lord, I am not high-minded . . . I do not exercise myself in great matters which are too high for me* (Prayer-Book Version).

A favourite Psalm of the eminent publisher, Alexander Macmillan. His biographer, Mr. C. L. Graves, adds that he loved to dwell on the greatness of the lesson in Ezekiel's reproof of the unfaithful shepherds (Ezek. xxxiv.), and another favourite quotation of his was Isaiah xxxii. 8: "But the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand".

After the death of his brother in South America, Prof. Elmslie wrote to his friend Dr. Andrew Harper:—

"It is no use trying to write the many perplexing questionings and thoughts it caused me. They are too vague and difficult to write, almost to speak. I never before felt what death was, and it is strange. Then, too, now all the conceptions of hereafter, etc., have taken a more real character and less of a speculative interest. But after all, the end of all the thinking has been to make me feel more helpless than ever, but also (I think) a little more driven to just be content to trust God. *Our* Psalm (CXXXI.) has become more to me than ever, and perhaps life and work a little more solemn. If only one could live a little more up to what one knows and desires."

CXXXI. 1.—*Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty.*

Jeremy Taylor says: "Primislaus, the first King of Bohemia, kept his country shoes always by him, to remember from whence he was raised, and Agathocles, by the furniture of his table, confessed that from a potter he was raised to be the King of Sicily."

CXXXII. 14.—*This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.*

This text is associated with the life of Nicolas Pavillon, Bishop of Alet, who was born at Paris in 1597. He came under the influence of St. Vincent de Paul, and was one of his most efficient helpers in missions among the poor. In 1637 it chanced that

¹ "Psalm Mosaics," p. 526.

M. d'Andilly, who was then an influential figure at Court, heard one of his sermons, and was so much impressed that he mentioned it to the Duchess d'Aiguillon, niece of Richelieu. The Duchess and the Princess of Condé went to hear Pavillon, and he became a fashionable orator, and Richelieu offered him the vacant benefice of Alet, at the foot of the Pyrenees. Louis XIII wished him to accept the richer and more attractive See of Auxerre, but Pavillon answered that he did not belong to himself but to the Church of Alet. He was consecrated at St. Lazare on the festival of the Assumption, 1639, and on 8 October of the same year he set out for his diocese. The journey occupied three weeks. When he reached his destination he was heard to repeat the words of the 132nd Psalm : "This is my rest for ever : here will I dwell ; for I have desired it".

The diocese extends to the boundary-line between France and Spain. "To reach the town," says Dr. Beard, "it is necessary to pass through a long defile in the mountain, cut by a torrent, by the side of which a narrow road, which in the seventeenth century was hardly passable for a wheeled carriage, had been made."

Lancelot sent the following description to Mère Angélique de St. Jean : "The frightful passage of the mountain defile, which is about half a league in length, makes the appearance of this little town somewhat more attractive. The first objects that meet the eye are a new stone bridge, with three fine arcades, and the Bishop's palace, which consists of a large building erected by the old abbots, where there is a garden, together with a very beautiful terrace, which runs all along the river ; but this is all that is beautiful in Alet."

Bishop Pavillon was the zealous protector of the Jansenists. "As long as he was inflexible the cause of Port-Royal was safe ; no peace could be made without him. His distance from the capital, the poverty of his See, the apostolic simplicity of his life, all added weight to his authority. He had never visited Paris since he first left it for Alet, and is recorded once to have replied to a peremptory mandate of the king that he should appear at court, that 'he was busy with the affairs of his diocese and could not come'."¹

¹ C. Beard, "Port-Royal," Vol. II, pp. 214, 228.

CXXXIII. 1.—*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.*

During the Wittenberg troubles of 1537, Melanchthon wrote to Veit Dietrich :—

“ Basil says, that the left hand does not need the right hand more than the Church needs concord among its teachers. O noble words and worthy of a Bishop! Would that all might give heed to them ! ”¹

Milton utters a solemn warning against the civil strife of his age :—

“ O shame to men ! Devil with devil damn'd
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly grace ; and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity and strife,
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy :
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait.”

CXXXV. 7.—*He bringeth the wind out of His treasures.*

“ A Hand seemed to guide that rushing wind ; it fell upon my cheek, my forehead, like a blessing warm from some heart of more than human tenderness. Then my own heart stirred and fluttered beneath that brooding warmth, and from its very depths two words went up, ‘ Our Father,’ and I knew that I had found the long-sought key, the pure, primeval language. This then was what I sought, what I needed, a Father who was a Spirit, the Father of Spirits and of men. ‘ Had He indeed come forth to meet me ? Then I knew that I was not far from home.’ ”—DORA GREENWELL.²

CXXXVI.—On one occasion the Psalm read by Erskine of Linlathen at family worship was the 136th, in which the words occur : “ Who smote Egypt in their first-born : for His mercy endureth for ever ”. “ Yes,” he said, in speaking of it afterwards, “ that has a meaning beyond what the Psalmist knew. There

¹ “ Corp. Ref.,” Vol. III, col. 452.

² “ Two Friends.”

was mercy even for Pharaoh : even Egypt and their first-born had a place in the mercy of God. Egypt and Assyria shall be blessed in the midst of the land." And then, with the same thought darting forward to the stern text in the New Testament, "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated"—"Yes," he said, "but Jacob was chosen for *his* special purpose, and Esau, that fine generous character, was rejected yet preserved for another purpose not less special. The purpose of God for all of us is to make us better. He can have no other intention for us!"¹

CXXXVI. 4.—*To Him who alone doeth great wonders.*

Prof. William MacGillivray wrote at the conclusion of his fifth and last volume on "British Birds :—

"If I have not very frequently indulged in reflections on the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as suggested by even my imperfect understanding of His works, it is not because I have not ever been sensible of the relations between the Creator and His creatures, nor because my chief enjoyment, when wandering among the hills and valleys, exploiting the rugged shores of the ocean, or searching the cultivated fields, has not been in a sense of His presence. 'To him who alone doeth great wonders be all glory and praise.'"

PSALM CXXXVII.

The Castilian Jewish poet Jehuda Halevi poured forth in his "Songs of Zion" his reverence for the past and his hopes for the future. Here is an apostrophe to Jerusalem :—

"O City of the world, beauteous in proud splendour
From the far West, behold me solicitous on thy behalf!
Oh that I had eagle's wings, that I might fly to thee,
Till I wet thy dust with my flowing tears!
My heart is in the East,
Whilst I tarry in the West.
How may I be joyous,
Or where find my pleasure?
How fulfil my vow,

¹ Reminiscences by Dean Stanley, "Letters of Thomas Erskine," p. 455.

O Zion! when I am in the power of Edom,
 And bend beneath Arabia's yoke?
 Truly Spain's welfare concerns me not;
 Let me but behold thy precious dust,
 And gaze upon the spot where once the Temple stood." ¹

Izaak Walton quotes the words of "an ingenious Spaniard," who says that "rivers and the inhabitants of the watery element were made for wise men to contemplate and fools to pass by without consideration". Walton himself thought that "the very sitting by the river's side is not only the quietest and fittest place for contemplation, but will invite an angler to it," and that God carried His prophets either to the desert or the seashore, that . . . He might settle their minds in a quiet repose, and there make them fit for revelation". "And this," he adds, "seems also to be intimated by the Children of Israel (Ps. cxxxvii.), who having in a sad condition banished all mirth and music from their pensive hearts, and having hung up their then mute harps upon the willow-trees growing by the rivers of Babylon, sat down upon these banks bemoaning the ruins of Sion, and contemplating their own sad condition."

Matthew Arnold wrote to his mother in 1867 that his little daughters Lucy and Nelly, "had a little squabble the other day, a most rare event, and after many tears were found shut in together reading the Psalms. 'We chose the twenty-eighth day,' said Lucy, 'because the waters of Babylon is so beautiful.' I call that a promising poetical taste." ²

cxxxvii. 3.—*For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth.*

Sir Walter Scott says, in the first chapter of "Old Mortality": "To compel men to dance and be merry by authority has rarely succeeded even on board of slave-ships, where it was formerly sometimes attempted by way of inducing the wretched captives to agitate their limbs and restore the circulation, during the few minutes they were permitted to enjoy the fresh air upon deck".

¹ C. F. Abbott, "Israel in Europe," p. 72.

² "Letters," Vol. I, p. 368.

CXXXVII. 5.—Bishop Phillips Brooks wrote in one of his notebooks: "As the Hebrew Psalmist prayed, 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning,' so let us in the same spirit pray that our powers may be of use to us, only while we abide in the religion of the right and the true. Let us beg that any power of reason, or imagination, or persuasion, or any other that we have may abandon us when we forget righteousness and God. Let us dread most of all to be builders for Satan with those powers which the Father gave us to build with for Him."¹

PSALM CXXXIX.

When William Blake had made up his mind to return from his country retreat at Felpham under the patronage of Mr. Hayley, to poverty and freedom in London, he wrote to his friend and patron, Mr. Butts:—

"I have a thousand and ten thousand things to say to you. My heart is full of futurity, I perceive that the sore travail which has been given me these three years leads to glory and honour. I rejoice and tremble: 'I am fearfully and wonderfully made'. I had been reading the 139th Psalm a little before your letter arrived. I take your advice. I see the face of my Heavenly Father: He lays His hand upon my head, and gives a blessing to all my work. Why should I be troubled? Why should my heart and flesh cry out? I will go on in the strength of the Lord; through Hell will I sing forth His praises; that the dragons of the deep may praise Him, and that those who dwell in darkness and in the sea-coasts may be gathered into His Kingdom."²

Thomas Erskine of Linlathen said: "This is the Psalm which I should wish to have before me on my death-bed".

CXXXIX. 8.—*If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there.*

Dora Greenwell prefixed to her poem entitled "*Si descendero in infernum, ades,*" this passage from a homily by Epiphanius:—

"Who cometh first, marching before the Divine hosts? Gabriel, accustomed to bring good tidings of great joy to men. He says, 'Lift up yourselves, ye gates; be broken, chains; open,

¹ "Life of Phillips Brooks," Vol. II, p. 66.

² Gilchrist's "Life of Blake," pp. 187, 188.

everlasting doors, make a highway for the Lord'. Then a shudder passes through Hell, its deep foundations are shaken, prison after prison is broken up; the conquering host penetrates into deeper gulfs. Adam himself who, as being the first to die, is deepest sunk in death, hears the steps of the Lord visiting the captives, and turning to those who are chained with him, he says, 'I hear the step of some one who draws near to us; if He deigns to descend here we are delivered; if we do but see Him we are saved'. As Adam speaks thus, the Saviour enters bearing His cross. So soon as Adam our father sees him, he smites upon his breast, and says, 'God our Saviour bringing with Him all His angels'. Jesus answers, 'And bringing with Him thy soul'."

CXLIII. 5.—*I muse on the work of Thy hands.*

"Bunyan," says Mark Rutherford, "warns his friends not to make a religion out of party distinctions. His religion was Jesus. We are to be planted in Him, have faith in Him, make a life out of Him. One of the signs by which we may know that we are in the Way is that we *muse* on Him, and that His company 'sweetens all things'." ¹

CXLIV. 12.—*That our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace* (with Is. XLIX. 2.—*In the shadow of His hand hath He hid me, and made me a polished shaft*).

Frances, Baroness Bunsen, wrote to her youngest daughter Matilda:—

"Will you try, my own child, to perfect and polish yourself? 'Let our daughters be as the polished corners of the temple' is a verse of a Psalm that always gives me an image equally just and pleasing. The corners of the temple are of good, firm stone or marble; the firmer the substance, the finer is the polish they bear; but the polish which renders them beautiful to look upon, lessens nothing of their power of supporting the edifice, and connecting its parts into a solid structure." ²

CXLV. 10.—*Thy saints shall bless thee* (with Rev. XIX. 3.—*And again they said, Alleluia*).

¹ "John Bunyan," p. 97.

² "Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen," Vol. II, p. 153.

“Such blessing and honour and glory and praise to God would never accompany common mercies ; all those alleluias are not, sure, the language of needy men. Now we are poor, we speak supplications ; and our beggar’s tone discovers our low condition ; all our language almost is complaining and craving, our breath fighting and our life a-labouring. But sure where all this is turned into eternal praising and rejoicing, the case must needs be altered, and all wants supplied and forgotten. I think their hearts full of joy and their mouths full of thanks, proves their state abounding, full of blessedness.”—RICHARD BAXTER.

That much-loved hermit of Port-Royal, M. Le Maître, was working upon the lives of the Saints, when, after a brief illness, he died on 4 November, 1658. Three days before his death he said that the labour upon which he was engaged was too holy for him ; it belonged to Saints alone to speak becomingly of Saints ; and that God would raise up some servant, whom he would Himself make worthy of this work.¹

CXLV. 16.—*Thou openest Thine hand.*

Luther said : “ Our Lord God must be a great man, for with one handful He feeds the whole world ”.²

CXLVI. 3, 4.—*Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth ; in that very day his thoughts perish* (with Is. II. 22.—*Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils*).

St. Francis Borgia, one of the associates of Loyola, and the third general of the Society of Jesus, had been in youth a brilliant soldier and courtier. It is said that he cherished a chivalrous passion for the beautiful Isabel of Portugal, wife of Charles V, who died young. It fell to the lot of Francis to identify officially the dead empress, and the shock of seeing so terrible a sight—for she had been dead many days—made a crisis in his life. Never more, he said, would he serve princes who could die.

When he was Duke of Gandia and Viceroy of Cataluña he

¹ C. Beard, “ Port-Royal,” Vol. I, p. 320.

² E. Kroker, “ Luthers Tischreden,” No. 223.

left his wealth and joined Ignatius, calling himself Father Francis the Sinner.

CXLVII. 8.—*Who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.*

"It was at Vevey, among the narcissus meadows," writes Sir E. T. Cook, "that Ruskin stored up the impressions which he cast into his prose-poem on the grass of the field. Everybody knows the passage: it is the one which Matthew Arnold cited as an example of Ruskin's genius in its best and most original exercise. The first thought of the passage occurs in his diary of 1849 . . . 'I looked at the slope of distant grass on the hill; and then at the waving heads near me. What a gift of God that is, I thought. Who could have dreamed of such a soft, green, continual, tender clothing for the dark earth—the food of cattle, and of man. Think what poetry has come of its pastoral influence, what happiness from its everyday ministering, and what life from its sustenance. Bread that strengtheneth man's heart—ah, well may the Psalmist number among God's excellencies, 'He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains'.'" ¹

CXLVII. 9.—*Who . . . feedeth the young ravens that call upon Him* (Prayer-Book Version).

Gilbert White of Selborne says:—

"The evening proceedings and manœuvres of the rooks are curious and amusing in the autumn. Just before dusk they return in long strings from the foraging of the day, and rendezvous by thousands over Selborne Down, where they wheel round in the air and spout and dive in a playful manner, all the while exerting their voices, and making a loud cawing, which being blended and softened by the distance that we at the village are below them, becomes a confused noise or chiding; or rather a pleasing murmur, very engaging to the imagination, and not unlike the cry of a pack of hounds in hollow, echoing woods, or the rushing of the wind in tall trees, or the tumbling of the tide upon a pebbly shore. When this ceremony is over, with the last gleam of day, they retire for the night to the deep beechen woods of Tisted and Ropley. We remember a little girl who, as she was going to bed, used to remark on such an occurrence, in the true spirit of physico-theology, that the rooks were say-

¹ "The Life of Ruskin," Vol. I, p. 245.

ing their prayers; and yet this child was much too young to be aware that the Scriptures have said of the Deity—that 'He feedeth the ravens who call upon him'."

See also "As You Like It," Act II. sc. iii. where old Adam says to Orlando:—

" I have five hundred crowns,
The thrifty hire I saved under your father.

.
Take that, and He that doth the ravens feed,
Yea, providently caters for the sparrow,
Be comfort to my age ! "

CXLVII. 17.—*He casteth forth his ice like morsels : who is able to abide His cold ?* (Prayer-Book Version).

Gilbert White of Selborne describes the bitterly cold January of 1776 when he went to London, "through a sort of Laplandian scene, very wild and grotesque indeed". "On the 27th much snow fell all day and in the evening the frost became very intense." During the next four nights "the cold was so penetrating that it occasioned ice in warm chambers and under beds; and in the day the wind was so keen that persons of robust constitutions could scarcely endure to face it. The Thames was at once so frozen over both above and below bridge that crowds ran about on the ice. The streets were now strangely encumbered by snow, which crumbled and trod dusty; and turning grey, resembled bay-salt. What had fallen on the roofs was so perfectly dry that from first to last it lay twenty-six days on the houses in the city; a longer time than had been remembered by the oldest housekeepers living."

CXLVIII. 8.—*Stormy wind fulfilling His word.*

These lines are in Milton's Eden morning hymn:—

" His praise, ye winds that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines,
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
Fountains, and ye that warble as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune His praise." ¹

¹ "Paradise Lost," Book V.

CXLIX.—Lord Rosebery says in his address on Cromwell:—

“It is quite true that Cromwell’s action not unfrequently jars with Christianity, as we in this nineteenth century understand it. But . . . his religion and that of the Puritans was based largely on constant, literal, daily reading of the Old Testament. The newer criticism would have found no patron in Cromwell. Indeed, I believe that its professors would have fared but ill at his hands. He himself lived with an absolutely child-like faith in the atmosphere and with the persons of the Old Testament. Joshua and Samuel and Elijah were as real and living beings to him as any people in history, or any of the persons by whom he was surrounded. His favourite Psalm, we are told, was the 68th—the Psalm that even in the tumult of the victory of Dunbar, he shouted on the field of battle before he ordered the pursuit of the retreating army. But it has always seemed to me that another Psalm, the 149th, much more closely reproduces the character, the ideas, and the practice of Cromwell: ‘Let the saints be joyful in glory. . . . Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all His saints.’ It is not a comfortable, or patient, or long-suffering creed, it is true; but remember, it is the creed that first convulsed and then governed England—the faith of men who carried their iron gospel into their iron lives, who could not have done what they did had they been hypocrites, and who would not have received their incomparable inspiration from a hypocrite.”

CXLIX. 9.—*This honour have all His saints.*

Thomas Carlyle wrote in 1838 to his brother, Dr. Carlyle:—

“Did you ever see Thomas Erskine (*Evidence* Erskine, Laird, Advocate, etc.) the Scotch Saint? I have seen him several times lately, and like him as one would do a draught of sweet rustic *mead* served in cut glasses and silver tray. One of the gentlest, kindest, best-bred of men. . . . On the whole, I take up my old love for the Saints. No class of persons can be found in this country with as much humanity in them; nay, with as much tolerance as the better sort of them have. The

tolerance of others is but doubt and indifference; touch the thing they do believe in and value, their own self-conceit, and they are rattlesnakes then!"¹

CL.—After quoting passages from the Bible which had brought great joy to his heart (Is. xxvi. 19, Hos. vi. 2, Eph. ii. 6) Bunyan says:—

“ Ah, these blessed considerations and scriptures, with many others of like nature, were in those days made to spangle in mine eyes; so that I have cause to say, ‘Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in the firmament of His power; praise Him for His mighty acts; praise Him according to His excellent greatness.’ ”²

¹ “New Letters,” Vol. I, p. 109.

² “Grace Abounding.”

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

C. B. MICHAELIS says, when passing in his exposition from the Psalter to the Proverbs, "We step out of the closet of David into the porch of Solomon, to admire the son of the great theologian as the great philosopher".¹

Among the best tributes to this Book in recent literature are those of Matthew Arnold. He wrote in 1877: "I have read my chapter in Proverbs—what a delicious book! 'The name of the Eternal is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe.' After breakfast I must read Ewald's commentary on the chapter and correct the few things that make bad sense; but in general our version of the Proverbs is particularly sound and fine, and indeed the book is such plain sailing that there were fewer openings for mistakes than in the Psalms and prophets."

In another letter he wrote: "I like reading my Bible without being baffled by unmeaningnesses. There are not very many in Proverbs, but it is so delicious a book that one is glad to get rid of what there are and to enjoy the book thoroughly."²

We hear an echo from Proverbs in the report of an Ironside leader, quoted by Carlyle:—

Adjutant-General Allen is describing a meeting of Parliament officers at Windsor. "We were, by a gracious hand of the Lord, led to find out the very steps (as we were all then jointly convinced) by which we had departed from the Lord, and provoked Him to depart from us. Which we found to be those cursed carnal Conferences our own conceited wisdom, our fears and want of faith had prompted us, the year before, to entertain with the King and his Party. And at this time and on this occasion, did the then Major Goffe (as I remember was his

¹ Quoted by A. B. Davidson, "Biblical and Literary Essays," p. 24.

² "Letters of Matthew Arnold," 1895, Vol. II, pp. 141-3,

Title) make use of that good word, Proverbs First and Twenty-third, 'Turn you at My reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known My words unto you.' Which, we having found out our sin, he urged as our duty from those words. And the Lord so accompanied by his Spirit that it had a kindly effect like a word of His, upon most of our hearts that were then present; which begot in us a great sense, and shame and loathing of ourselves for our iniquities, and a justifying of the Lord as righteous in His proceedings against us."

I. 10.—*My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.*

In a letter written at the age of twenty-three to G. B. Loring, James Russell Lowell describes a meeting at which his betrothed bride, Maria White, presented a banner to the Watertown Washington Total Abstinence Society in the name of the women of Watertown. "Maria looked—I never saw any woman look so grand. She was dressed in snowy white, with a wreath of oak-leaves and water-lilies round her head, and a water-lily in her bosom. There were a great many tears in a great many eyes when she presented the banner. She did it as might have been expected. She said a few words in clear, silvery tones. She told them that the banner came from their mothers and sisters, their daughters and wives, and that they must hold it sacred. The motto on the banner was excellent. It was this verse from the Bible, 'My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not'." ¹

III. 5.—In his memorial address on Mr. W. T. Stead, Dr. Clifford mentioned that the verse of Scripture which had been most helpful to the great journalist was Proverbs III. 5, which he had first read in General Gordon's room at Southampton: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding".

IV. 18.—*The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

The learned Unitarian historian, Dr. Charles Beard, chose this text for his memorial sermon on the 100th anniversary of the birth of Dr. W. E. Channing. "I think," he said, "we may

¹ "Letters of James Russell Lowell," Vol. I, p 74.

claim Channing as one of the Saints of the Church universal. But to claim him thus is at the same time to give him up. What belongs to the Church of Christ is no private possession of our own. For myself, I cannot regret it; I say, with Angélique Arnauld, 'I am of the Church of all the Saints, and all the Saints are of my Church'."

iv. 23.—*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

"Even the irresponsible dreams of sleep may play a great part in life, thrust themselves in among realities, twist and turn them with necromantic power. As for day-dreams, are they not the origin and breeding-ground alike of man's baseness and nobility? All his life-history is foreshadowed in his dreams. 'Out of the heart are the issues of life;' hence in day-dreams, the unchecked wellings up of the heart, the inmost key to human character is to be found. Know what a man's imagination revels in, what his thoughts, when off the chain, scamper back to, and you know the inmost secret of the man."—JAMES McKECHNIE.¹

v. 18, 19.—*Rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe.*

Melanchthon wrote to his friend David Chytraeus, professor at Rostock, whose marriage took place in 1553: "Although many things have been truly and sweetly written on the chaste love of the betrothed bridegroom and bride, yet nothing is sweeter than the words of Solomon in the 5th chapter of Proverbs, where he pictures such fervent and sincere love by the image of the hind and the roe. I should like you often to think of this. And remember as you do so that this affection of the betrothed ones is the shadow of that love with which the Son of God loves the nature He took upon Him, and us, therefore, 'who are bone of His bones'." ²

vi. 6.—"As Christian was sleeping in the arbour on the hill Difficulty, there came one to him and said, 'Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise'. And with that Christian suddenly started up, and sped on his way and went on apace till he came to the top of the hill."

¹ Meredith's Allegory, "The Shaving of Shagpat," p. 111.

² "Corp. Ref.," Vol. VIII, col. 150.

IX. 1.—*Wisdom hath builded her house.*

At the inauguration of the University of Freiburg in 1460, the first Rector, Andreas Hummel, delivered an address from the words, "Wisdom hath builded herself a house". He attacked the ignorance of the monastic orders, of the laity, and of the nobles. One of the early students of Freiburg University was John Reuchlin, who matriculated in May, 1470.¹

X. 27.—*The fear of the Lord longeth days : but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.*

Sainte-Beuve, in his history of Port-Royal, mentions that the Jansenists applied this text to their enemy Cardinal Richelieu, who passed away on 4 December, 1642, the day on which a passage from Proverbs x. and xi. was sung in Paris as the Epistle for the feast of the Holy Relics. They said it was "a terrible coincidence".

XI. 14.—*In the multitude of counsellors there is safety.*

Sir Walter Raleigh's comment on this passage is well known to readers of "Kenilworth". The young adventurer had performed "the daring and loving piece of service" of repelling the Queen's physician Masters from Say's Court, the home of his sick lord the Earl of Sussex, who lies in deep sleep under the influence of Wayland Smith's healing medicine. In a happy moment Raleigh becomes known to the Queen as "the good Squire Lack-cloak," and he gives himself up frankly as the sole person responsible for the dismissal of Masters. "'Thou wert over-bold,' says the Queen, 'to deny the access of my Doctor Masters. Know'st thou not that Holy Writ saith, 'in the multitude of counsel there is safety!'"

"'Ay, madam,' said Walter, 'but I have heard learned men say, that the safety spoken of is for the physicians, not for the patient.'

"'By my faith, child, thou hast pushed me home,' said the Queen, laughing; 'for my Hebrew learning does not come quite at a call.'"

"The gentle Squire Lack-cloak" soon became "the good Knight Lack-Cloak".

XI. 30.—*He that winneth souls is wise.*

¹ Ludwig Geiger, "Johann Reuchlin," p. 7.

Among the thatched cottages of Kinrossie, with its pretty village green and antique market-cross, stands the Free Church of Collace, where Dr. Andrew Bonar ministered in youth. Not far distant, on the edge of Dunsinnane Wood, is the manse, hidden from view more than it was forty years ago by the growth of trees and hedges. A vine and a fig-tree climb up on either side of the old study-window, and over two other windows are carved the Hebrew words, "He that winneth souls is wise" and "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come and will not tarry".¹

XII. 23.—*A prudent man concealeth knowledge.*

Hurrell Froude wrote in his Journal on 29 October, 1826:—

"In this day's lesson (Prov. XII. 23) there is 'a prudent man concealeth knowledge'. Not allowing oneself to talk of an opinion is one of the surest helps to acting upon it, as it will find some vent. Communicating it is like opening the valve of a steam boiler. Besides, if other people assent to it in theory, while they contradict it in their way of life, it gives us a fresh difficulty to encounter in annexing to it its real force: seeing people take up with blank words; 'salt that hath lost its savour' is exceedingly infectious."

XIII. 3.—*He that guardeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.*

The mother of Lord Lawrence said to one of her sons, as he was about to start for India: "I know you don't like advice, so I will not give you much. But pray recollect two things. Don't marry a woman who had not a good mother, and don't be too ready to speak your mind. It was the rock on which your father shipwrecked his prospects."²

XIII. 15.—*The way of transgressors is hard.*

Dr. John Brown was only twenty-two when he wrote from Chatham to his brother William in 1832:—

"And now, my dear William, though I am 400 miles away from you, my thoughts are often with you, and they are sometimes anxious and sad, at others cheering and satisfying. My dear William, be assured that there is no real happiness where

¹ "Reminiscences of Dr. Andrew Bonar," p. 23.

² Bosworth Smith's "Life of Lord Lawrence," Vol. I, p. 9.

there is the indulgence in *guilt*—that pure thoughts and upright actions as assuredly and as consequently cause real happiness as the sun, light, and heat. Keep this always before you ; Know the God of your fathers. Although I do not think I am really religious—I fear I am not—I can see from experience that the way of transgression is *hard*. In everything you do think of its *strict morality*. When you go to Mr. Syme's¹ you will be exposed to great temptation, and if you do not *take high ground* instantly you will never be safe. Whenever you hear them talking impurely leave the room instantly, and give them very soon to know that you differ from them because *God* differs from them, and when asked why you would not do so and so, never be ashamed of saying God has forbidden it; the *Bible* says so and so."

XIV. 10.—In the Valley of the Shadow of Death Christiana said to Mercy :—

"Now I see what my poor husband went through ; I have heard much of this place, but I never was here before now. Poor man ! he went here all alone, in the night ; he had night almost quite through the way : also these fiends were busy about him, as if they would have torn him in pieces. Many have spoken of it, but none can tell what the Valley of the Shadow of Death should mean until they come in it themselves. 'The heart knoweth his own bitterness ; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.' To be here is a fearful thing."

XIV. 23.—*In all labour there is profit.*

Dr. John Cairns wrote from Berwick in 1846 to his friend the Rev. John Clark :—

"It is a great blessing to have both a sphere that suits one and a sphere that improves one ; and I trust by the grace of Christ mine will combine both these advantages. 'In all labour there is profit.'"

xv. 25.—*The Lord will destroy the house of the proud : but He will establish the border of the widow.*

Dean Burgon, in his Memoir of Charles Page Eden, tells us that this good man always spoke of his mother with intense affection. He owed everything (he said) to her wise training

¹ See "Horæ Subsecivæ," 1st Series, p. 360.

and bright example. She survived her husband thirty-seven years. Shortly before the close of her life (25 March, 1846), on being invited by her son to inscribe her name in a private memorandum book, she recorded the experience of her eighty-two years of life as follows: "The Lord will destroy the house of the proud, but He will establish the border of the widow".¹

XVI. 3.—Dr. Chalmers, in recommending "Clarke's Promises" to a friend, said that among "the splendid galaxy of comfort" on one page, he had been particularly charmed with the texts:—

"Commit thy works unto the Lord and thy thoughts shall be established" (Prov. xvi. 3) and

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord" (Lam. iii. 26).

XVII. 17.—*A friend loveth at all times.*

"'A friend,' says Emerson, 'is a person with whom I may be sincere; before him I may think aloud.' The Rabbis said the same thing. 'Get a companion,' they counsel us, 'to whom you can tell all your secrets.'" ²

XVII. 17.—*A brother is born for adversity.*

Dr. Blaikie mentions in his "Life of Livingstone" that the great explorer was obliged to borrow money from his elder brother for the expenses of his second session at Glasgow University. The biographer adds in a note:—

"The readiness of elder brothers to advance part of their hard-won earnings, or otherwise encourage younger brothers to attend College, is a pleasant feature of family life in the humbler classes of Scotland. The case of James Beattie the poet, assisted by his brother David, and that of Sir James Simpson, who owed so much to his brother Alexander, will be remembered in this connexion."

XVIII. 10.—*The name of the Lord is a strong tower.*

Augustus Hare writes in the chapter on Seville in his "Wanderings in Spain":—

"Far above houses and palaces, far above the huge cathedral itself, soars the beautiful Giralda, its colour a pale pink, encrusted all over with delicate Moorish ornament; so high that its detail is quite lost as you gaze upward; so large that you may easily

¹ "Twelve Good Men," Vol. II, p. 306.

² Quoted by Israel Abrahams, "Aspects of Judaism," p. 2.

ride on horseback to the summit, up the broad roadway in the interior. The lower part of the tower alone is really Moorish; the upper tier, with the bells and the surmounting cupolas, was added by Francesco Ruiz in 1568, who inscribed his work with the large letters: 'Turris fortissima nomen Dei'."

XVIII. 12.—*Before destruction the heart of man is haughty.*

One of the prisoners set before the bar of Immanuel in Bunyan's "Holy War" is Mr. Haughty. He defends himself in these words:—

" 'Gentlemen, I have always been a man of courage and valour, and have not used, when under the greatest clouds, to sneak or hang down the head like a bulrush; nor did it at all at any time please me to see men veil their bonnets to those that have opposed them; yea, though their adversaries seemed to have ten times the advantage of them. I did not use to consider who was my foe, nor what the cause was in which I was engaged. It was enough for me if I carried it bravely, fought like a man, and came off like a victor.'

" 'Court. Mr. Haughty, you are not here indicted for that you have been a valiant man, nor for your courage and stoutness in times of distress, but for that you have made use of this your pretended valour to draw the town of Mansoul into acts of rebellion both against the great King, and Immanuel, his Son. This is the crime and the thing wherewith thou art charged in and by the indictment.'

" But he made no answer to that."

XVIII. 24.—*There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*

" Without a friend thou canst not well live; and if Jesus be not above all friends to thee, thou shalt be indeed sad and desolate."—THOMAS À KEMPIS.

Jeremy Taylor describes an ancient hieroglyph which was intended to symbolize friendship. It was the picture of a young man, lightly clad and bareheaded, to signify his activity and readiness to render service. Along the fringe of his garment ran the words "death and life," to show that in life and in death friendship was the same. Across his forehead was written "summer and winter," to show that friendship was unchanged in prosperity and adversity. And his hand pointed to his heart

with the words written on it "far and near," to show that for true friendship distance makes no difference.¹

"We all like to have a human hand in ours and a human heart beating for our own, at least in the great crises and troubles of life. There is One, the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, who hath promised that He will never leave us, never forsake us, not even when heart and flesh do faint and fail. Let us seek a closer interest in Him, the Holy Lamb of God. It will brighten every joy God may give us in life. It will soothe whatever sorrow He may send us to know and feel that in Christ we have a Brother and a Friend."—DR. JAMES MACGREGOR.²

XIX. 17.—"He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord ;' there is more rhetorick in that one sentence than in a library of sermons."—SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

XIX. 17.—*He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord ; and that which he hath given will He pay him again.*

In the "Journal of the Plague Year," Defoe mentions the great kindness shown by charitable persons in visiting and relieving the sick. "I will not undertake to say, as some do, that none of those charitable people were suffered to fall under the calamity itself ; but this I may say, that I never knew any one of them that miscarried, which I mention for the encouragement of others in case of the like distress ; and doubtless, if 'they that give to the poor, lend to the Lord, and He will repay them,' those that hazard their lives to give to the poor, and to comfort and assist the poor in such a misery as this, may hope to be protected in the work."

"Give Him thyself, and He will receive thee upon the same terms as Socrates did his scholar Æschines, who gave himself to his master because he had nothing else : ' Accipio, sed ea lege ut te tibi meliorem reddam quam accepi ' ;—that He may return thee to thyself better than He received thee."—RICHARD BAXTER.³

XIX. 22.—*The desire of a man is his kindness.* [The Revised Version suggests the alternative reading, *That which maketh a man to be desired is his kindness.*]

At the parish church of Ellingham, in Hampshire, this text

¹ Quoted by Rev. J. M. E. Ross in "Lessons from Jeremiah".

² "Life and Letters," p 131. ³ "The Saints' Everlasting Rest."

is inscribed on a brass tablet erected in the chancel to the memory of the 4th Earl of Strafford. Ellingham Church is associated with Lady Alicia Lisle of Moyles Court, who was the noblest victim of Monmouth's rebellion. The text chosen for Lord Strafford might have been fittingly inscribed on that grey stone tomb beneath the southern wall of the church which marks her last resting-place. She was beheaded by order of Judge Jeffreys in the market-place of Winchester in September, 1685.

xx. 27.—*The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord.*

One of the most famous of Bishop Phillips Brooks' sermons was preached from this text. He delivered it at Westminster Abbey in 1879 on the 4th of July.

Lady Frances Baillie, a sister-in-law of Dean Stanley, tells an incident in connexion with the occasion. "After the service she slipped out into the deanery by the private door, and reached the drawing-room before any of the guests who were to come in from the Abbey. She found the Dean with tears running down his face, a most extraordinary thing for him; and as soon as she appeared he burst out with expressions of the intensest admiration, saying that he had never been so moved by any sermon that he could remember, and dwelling on the wonderful taste and feeling displayed in the passage at the end."

In that passage, spoken on the anniversary of American Independence, the great American preacher had used these words: "The nations are the golden candlesticks which hold aloft the glory of the Lord. No candlestick can be so rich or venerable that men shall honour it if it holds no candle. 'Show us your man,' land cries to land.

"In such days any nation out of the midst of which God has led another nation as He led ours out of the midst of yours, must surely watch with anxiety and prayer the peculiar development of our common humanity of which that new nation is made the home, the special burning of the human candle in that new candlestick; and if she sees a hope and promise that God means to build in that land some strong and free and characteristic manhood, which shall help the world to its completeness, the mother-land will surely lose the thought and memory of what-

ever anguish accompanied the birth, for gratitude over the gain which humanity has made, 'for joy that a man is born into the world'."

The preacher closed with an earnest appeal that prayer should rise from the mother-land for America.

xx. 27.—*The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord.*

Dean Inge writes: "The supremacy of the reason is the favourite theme of the Cambridge Platonists, two of whom, Whichcote and Culverwel, are never tired of quoting the text, 'The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord'. 'Sir, I oppose not rational to spiritual,' writes Whichcote to Tuckney, 'for spiritual is most rational.'"¹

xxi. 1.—*The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord.*

From this text Philip Henry preached at the Restoration in 1660; but many years afterwards, says Dr. Stoughton, he dated a letter 29 May, as a day in which the bitter was mingled with the sweet.

xxi. 16.—The shepherds on the Delectable Mountains showed Christian and Hopeful a stile leading into a meadow on the left hand of the way. Then said the shepherds, From that stile there goes a path that leads directly to Doubting Castle, which is kept by Giant Despair; and these men (pointing to them among the tombs) came once on pilgrimage, as you do now, even till they came to that same stile. And because the right way was rough in that place, they chose to go out of it into that meadow; and there were taken by Giant Despair and cast into Doubting Castle; where after they had awhile been kept in the dungeon, he at last did put out their eyes, and led them among those tombs, where he has left them to wander to this very day; that the saying of the wise man might be fulfilled: 'He that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead'." Christian and Hopeful (who had recently escaped from the dungeon of Giant Despair) "looked upon one another with tears gushing out, but yet said nothing to the shepherds".

xxiii. 26.—*My son, give Me thine heart.*

Dr. A. H. Charteris wrote of his old minister in the Tron Church, Edinburgh, Dr. Maxwell Nicholson:—

¹ "Christian Mysticism," p. 20.

"I had the honour of preaching his funeral sermon in St. Stephen's. His beautiful face, his devoted life, his splendid preaching, come often into my mind, as blended in a lovely picture of times gone by. Of his head and his heart there is proof visible, though inadequate, in his three volumes of sermons, especially the one called 'Rest in Jesus'. I heard him preach several of them: the greatest being, 'My son, give Me thine heart'. I think I hear him describe the heart set free from sin and going God-wards as like the mother dove, captive, then the moment she is free, 'swift as the arrow from the twanging bow,' making straight for the home of her affections." ¹

XXIV. 11, 12.—Christina Rossetti wrote three sonnets under the title, "If thou sayest, Behold we knew it not".

Dr. Livingstone wrote to his old friend Mr. James Young in 1872 :—

"*Opere peracto ludemus*—the work being finished, we will play—you remember in your Latin Rudiments lang syne. It is true for you, and I rejoice to think it is now your portion, after working nobly, to play. May you have a long spell of it! I am differently situated; I shall never be able to play. To me it seems to be said: 'If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that be ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold we knew it not, doth not He that pondereth the heart consider, and He that keepeth the soul doth He not know, and shall He not give to every one according to his works?' I have been led, unwittingly, into the slaving field of the Banians and Arabs in Central Africa. I have seen the woes inflicted and I must still work and do all I can to expose and mitigate the evils." ²

XXVII. 6.—*Faithful are the wounds of a friend.*

"Upon a rock above me," writes Dora Greenwell in "Two Friends," "my eye lit upon a familiar sign, a cross, and beneath it these letters: 'vis fugere a Deo, fuge ad Deum,' and while I gazed, a pale, majestic face looked upon me rebukingly; a form passed by, with kingly but uneven step, as of one wounded even to death. He spoke not, but I read within his eye this saying, 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend'. Then I sighed within my spirit so deeply that an icy band burst; resistance, rebellion

¹ "Life of Dr. Charteris," p. 41.

² Dr. Blaikie's "Life of Livingstone," p. 443.

were gone. The yoke to which God Himself had stooped could not be too grievous to be borne. I saw this solemn Trinity, Nature, and Man, and God, pierced with the self-same wound. I knew that they would suffer, I knew that they would be restored together."

xxviii. 10.—*Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good things in possession.*

"A very usual way for God to bring down the lofty, whether in Church or State, is to allow them to dig a pit, and then to fall therein."—DR. JOHN DUNCAN.¹

xxx. 8.—*Give me neither poverty nor riches.*

"Most of us have cause to be thankful for that which is bestowed; but we have all, probably, reason to be still more grateful for that which is withheld, and more especially for our being denied the sudden possession of riches. In the Litany, indeed, we call upon the Lord to deliver us 'in all time of our wealth,' but how few of us are sincere in deprecating such a calamity."—CHARLES LAMB.²

xxx. 8.—*Feed me with food convenient for me.*

Frances, Baroness Bunsen, wrote to her mother from Rome in 1833:—

"The removal of all embarrassment in circumstances is one of those things for which I dare not ask in prayer; I can ask, and do, that I and mine may be provided for in the future, as we have been in the past, with all that is needful; relief will come *when it is good for me*. For my dear children's advance in the course of the last year I cannot be sufficiently thankful."³

xxx. 15.—Bunyan says in "Grace Abounding":—

"By these things my mind was now so turned that it lay like a horse-leech at the vein; crying, Give, give (Prov. xxx. 15); yea, it was so fixed on eternity and on the things about the kingdom of heaven (that is, so far as I knew, though as yet, God knows, I knew but little), that neither pleasures, nor profits, nor persuasions, nor threats, could loose it, or make it let go its hold."

¹ "Colloquia Peripatetica."

² Essay on "The Illustrious Defunct".

³ "Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen," Vol. I, p. 396.

xxx. 26.—*The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks.*

A favourite text of J. M. Neale. He interprets the words mystically as referring to the one true Rock, in the caverns of which faithful souls find refuge.

xxx. 28.—*The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in king's palaces.*

Sir Thomas Browne, like Melanchthon with his bee-lore, loved to think about the "little citizens".

"Out of this rank," he says, "Solomon chose the object of his admiration; indeed, what reason may not go to school to the wisdom of bees, ants, and spiders? What wise hand teacheth them to do what reason cannot teach us? Ruder heads stand amazed at those prodigious pieces of nature, whales, elephants, dromedaries, and camels; these, I confess, are the colossuses and majestick pieces of her hand; but in these narrow engines there is more curious mathematicks; and the civility of these little citizens more neatly sets forth the wisdom of their Maker."¹

THE PRAISE OF THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN.

xxxI.—Luther applied this passage to his wife, Katherina von Bora, when he was praising her good qualities to his table companions. "It was God's will," he said, "that I should take pity on the forsaken one. And the result, God be praised, has been most fortunate, for I have a pious and faithful wife." Luther said in 1537 that his Katie had served him not only as a wife, but as a maid. He wished her to inherit everything he left behind, for he thought that the children ought to receive from the mother and not the mother from the children.²

xxxI. 14.—*She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.*

J. M. Neale says on this passage: "The prayers you offer, the hymns you sing, the books of devotion you use, nay, after their own poor sort, the sermons you hear; how far, far hence in time; how far, far hence in distance, do their sources lie? Perhaps from some quaint mediæval German house; lanes, fields,

¹ "Religio Medici."

² On his application of the verses in Proverbs, see E. Kroker, "Katharina von Bora" (1906), p. 62.

gardens, deep in snow—snow capping the tourelles, snow embroidering the steps of the great central Cross, snow continually sliding from the sharp, steep pitch of the roof of the Chapel, you get a prayer which you use in this dear little oratory at Christmastide. Perhaps from the dog days of an Andalusian Convent, orange-trees in blossom and fruit together, the glassless shutters everywhere tightly closed, the fountains the only moving, sounding thing in the dead noonday silence, when there was not a breath to stir the lemon-tree or pomegranate bush, you got such music as that to me lovely introit, ‘Like as the hart desireth after the water-brooks’. Perhaps from the Confession, that is, the tomb built, altar-shape, over the resting-place of a martyr—altar for the Martyr of martyrs—poor, plain, unadorned, you get such a hymn as ‘O God, Thy soldier’s crown and guard’. Perhaps from some shrine, gorgeous with carving, and gold, and enamel, and glittering with a hundred tapers, you get such another as ‘He, the confessor’. Prayers, sermons, hymns, classes, all the same thing; all bringing the food from afar.”

xxxI. 15.—*She riseth also while it is yet night.*

J. M. Neale remarks in a sermon on this text:—

“I know nothing more striking than Matins, when sung, in the very few places throughout Europe where they are now sung, in the middle of the night. In their perfection they are to be heard in the Grande Chartreuse. Imagine, in the first place, the intense stillness of that mountain solitude, the desert of St. Bruno; itself twice the height of Snowdon, girt in below with most deep and solemn pine woods, seamed with ravines and scarred with precipices; but far higher peaks, in their perpetual snow, towering around on every side. Then the long, high, narrow chapel, where you gaze down from a lofty western gallery on the sixty monks, placed stall-wise, looking so ghostly in their white vestments and cowls; each with his dark lantern at his side. The Psalms are sung in the peculiar Carthusian way, so slowly that Sunday Matins take more than two hours; and in perfect darkness, except the faint glimmer from two small tapers on the far-off altar. But in the Antiphons and Responses, the light is flashed from the drawn back door of the lanterns on the great choir books, and then concealed as the Psalm or Lesson proceeds (except, in the latter case, the one lantern of the reader).

And then, in the 'Te Deum' the bells of the convent ring out so gloriously in the cold, frosty air—it always freezes at night, even in July, there—so far away from, and above all the haunts of men. And then the wooden sandals of the monks clatter through the lonely cloisters, and for two hours, till Lauds (for the services are said separately) all is silent. On two different years I have had the privilege of hearing this, and so it is you can understand what Matins really mean. 'She riseth while it is yet night.'"

XXXI. 20.—*She has opened her hand to the needy, and has stretched out her hands to the poor* (Roman Catholic rendering).

This text is inscribed on the monument erected in St. Michael's Cemetery, San Francisco, to Mother Mary Baptist (Katharine Russell), sister of Lord Russell of Killowen. "A good text surely," says her brother and biographer, Father Matthew Russell, "to place over our 'valiant woman,' who not only opened her right hand to give alms to those in want, but who, when the sick and suffering presented themselves, stretched out both her hands, opened wide her arms to embrace them, to cherish them, to nurse them back to health, while using a quiet and prudent zeal for the health of their souls." ¹

XXXI. 28.—*Her husband also, and he praiseth her.*

The Duke of Savoy, husband of Margaret of France, to whom he was married in 1559, wore for love of his wise and virtuous wife, a cross of gold and pearls, surmounted by the ducal coronet and inscribed with the motto "Quis diceret laudes" ('Who may praise her worthily?') ²

Dr. Scott Holland, in his memorial tribute to Dr. Gregory, mentions that when the Venerable Dean of St. Paul's was dying, his daughter said: "Shall we read the whole service?" He replied, "No; not the first lesson. It's Proverbs; and I shall not want Proverbs any more." ³

¹ "The Three Sisters of Lord Russell of Killowen," p. 159.

² Winifred Stephens, "Margaret of France, Duchess of Savoy," p. 243.

³ "Commonwealth," September, 1911.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

THOUGHTS of disappointment and sorrow come first to mind as we open the Book of Ecclesiastes. We remember Miss Rossetti's lines on the shadowed later years of Solomon :—

“ He who wore out pleasure and mastered all lore,
Solomon, wrote ‘ Vanity of Vanities ’ ;
Down to death, of all that went before,
In his mighty long life the record is this.

With loves by the hundred, wealth beyond measure,
Is this he who wrote ‘ Vanity of Vanities ’ !
Yea, ‘ Vanity of vanities,’ he saith of pleasure,
And of all he learned set his seal to this.”

We recall the three lines with which Thackeray closed his greatest novel : “ Ah ! *Vanitas Vanitatum* ! which of us is happy in this world ? Which of us has his desire ? or, having it is satisfied ?—Come children, let us shut up the box and the puppets, for our play is played out.”

With Thackeray's words we may compare Cardinal Newman's recollections of his visit to his friend Keble at Hursley, in 1865, and his unexpected meeting there with Pusey. Writing to Mrs. Froude, Newman said :—

“ When I got to Keble's door, he happened to be at it, but we did not know each other, and I was obliged to show him my card. . . . As Mrs. Keble was ill, we then dined together *tête-à-tête*—a thing we perhaps had never done before—there was something awful in three men meeting in old age who had worked together in their best days. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, was the sad burden of the whole,—once so united, now so broken up, so counter to each other—though neither of them of course would quite allow it. Keble has since written to me,

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'When shall we three meet again? Soon—when the hurly burly's done.' "

A sighing wind from this book drives the leaves of life before it. Sir Thomas Browne was thinking of the Preacher's words (I. 9) when he wrote:—

"To see ourselves again, we need not look for Plato's Year; every man is not only himself; there have been many Diogeneses, and as many Timons, though but few of that name; men are lived over again; the world is now as it was in ages past; there was none then, but there hath been some one since, that parallels him, and is, as it were, his revived self."

"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun."

Dr. John Cairns wrote at the age of twenty-one, thinking amid the full splendour of his strength, of life's illusions: "Nothing is more fallacious as a test of true satisfaction and tranquillity than the flash of joy or jocularly which blazes forth in common society. There is the sparkling froth, to be sure, which dances on the surface of the gay mountain stream, but there is also the wreath of foam which bubbles on the crest of the storm-tossed wave. Never before had I an idea of the meaning of the words, 'he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow'. Were it not for the light and the hopes of Christianity I really do not see how I could avoid absolute despondency when I contemplate human nature and human life." ¹

Carlyle understood the words (II. 2) "I said of laughter, it is mad". "True laughter," he wrote to Emerson, "is as rare as any other truth—the sham of it frequent and detestable, like all other shams. I know nothing wholesomer, but it is rarer even than Christmas, which comes but once a year, and does always come once." ²

The paths on one side of the book lead to the dark place whither all that is mortal tends, for "all go unto one place" (III. 20).

Cardinal Vaughan used to say that the work of men resembled a game of chess. Every one is useful to the game—the

¹ Prof. McEwen's "Life of John Cairns," p. 83.

² "Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson," Vol. I, p. 350.

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king, the queen, the knights, the pawns—they are all made of the same stuff and each plays his own part for the time, but at the end of the game all alike are swept off the board by the same hand into the same box.

In the later chapters the path descends steeply. The word is heard "Let him remember the days of darkness" (xi. 8).

George Meredith wrote in 1890 to the Rt. Hon. John Morley, referring to the death of his son Arthur: "I pass unto the shades of dear ones and have to question myself of the kind of lamp I have trimmed to light me. With all the dues to life, I am ready for my day of darkness."¹

Sorrowfully, too, comes the message, "If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be" (xi. 3). We picture Father Eustace, of "The Monastery" standing by the bedside of the dead Lady of Avenel. "'Woe to me,' said the good monk, 'if indeed she went not hence in good assurance—woe to the reckless shepherd, who suffered the wolf to carry a choice one from the flock, while he busied himself with trimming his sling and his staff to give the monster battle! Oh! if in the long Hereafter, aught but weal should that poor spirit share, what has my delay cost?—the value of an immortal soul!'

"He then approached the body, full of the deep remorse natural to a good man of his persuasion, who devoutly believed the doctrines of the Catholic Church. 'Ay,' said he, gazing on the pallid corpse, from which the spirit had parted so placidly as to leave a smile upon the thin blue lips, which had been so long wasted by decay that they had parted with the last breath of animation without the slightest convulsive tremor—'Ay,' said Father Eustace, 'there lies the faded tree, and—as it fell, so it lies—awful thought for me, should my neglect have left it to descend in an evil direction!'

The closing chapter is a short straight path ending in the place of sleep.

J. H. Newman wrote in his diary in 1859: "I think as death comes on, his cold breath is felt on soul as on body, and that viewed naturally, my soul is half dead now, whereas then it was

¹ "Letters of George Meredith," Vol. II, p. 435.

in the freshness and fervour of youth. And this may be the ground of the grave warning of the inspired writer: (XII. 1). 'Memento Creatoris tui in diebus juventutis tue, antequam veniat tempus afflictionis . . . antequam tenebrescat sol,' etc." ¹

XII. 3.—*In the days when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves.*

Dean Burgon wrote as follows of his beloved mother's slow decline: "In old times the driving up of my cab to the door was the signal for her I loved hastily to descend the stairs. She used to meet me almost at the door in the hall, exclaiming 'Welcome! Welcome!' and with her dear kind arms extended, embracing me and kissing me heartily on the cheek three or four times. Presently, it used to be on the stairs that I saw her outstretched arms, and received her warm embrace. By degrees, it seemed to me as if she descended a fewer and fewer number of stairs. Latterly it was at the drawing-room door that I felt her hearty and repeated kiss, and heard her emphatic, 'Welcome, welcome, my boy! my poor boy,' and so on. What a warm embrace it used to be! She used to open her dear arms quite wide, and enfold me. But she could not quite do this at last, or, at least, not in quite the same way. I believe the last time but one I came home, she only rose from her chair. The last time of all, I embraced her, on arriving home, *as she sat in her chair!*" ²

John Bunyan leads his saints down this narrow path, where voices whisper messages from the past and the future.

"In process of time (says Bunyan) there came a post to the town again, and his business was with Mr. Ready-to-halt. So he inquired him out, and said, I am come from Him whom thou hast loved and followed, though upon crutches; and my message is, to tell thee that He expects thee at His table, to sup with Him in His kingdom, the next day after Easter; wherefore prepare thyself for this journey. Then he also gave him a token that he was a true messenger, saying, 'I have broken thy golden bowl, and loosed thy silver cord' (XII. 6).

The message to Mr. Honest was, "All the daughters of music shall be brought low" (XII. 4), and to Mr. Valiant, "His pitcher

¹ Wilfrid Ward, "Life of Cardinal Newman," Vol. I, p. 576.

² "Life of Dean Burgon," Vol. I, p. 229.

was broken at the fountain" (XII. 6). To Mr. Standfast the messenger said, "You need not doubt the truth of my message, for here is a token of the truth thereof, thy wheel is broken at the cistern" (XII. 6).

There are transition texts in Ecclesiastes which guide the reader's thoughts from the cemetery to the gardens of youth. One of these passages (III. 4) was in Luther's thoughts when he wrote from Coburg to comfort his friend Dr. Justus Jonas, then at the Diet of Augsburg, who had lost the baby son born at Wittenberg after his departure. He reminded the sorrowing father of the many blessings left to him, especially that of a virtuous wife, whose price was far above rubies, and continued in this strain:—

"You would not wish, like the rich man in the gospel (St. Luke XVI. 19), to be wholly occupied with pleasure, and to have no share in the lot of Christ's brethren—the violent who through many tribulations take the Kingdom of God by force. So I plead with you to accept patiently this discipline of your Father. There is a time to rejoice, there is also a time to weep; we gladly accept the one, but we must not rebel against the other. May the Lord Jesus, who has taken your little son to Himself, and who will care better for him than you could do, comfort and strengthen you. Amen."¹

Our remaining illustrations from this book show the strong rejoicing in their strength.

J. G. Whittier, when publishing a volume of his Anti-Slavery Poems, quoted on the title page these words of S. T. Coleridge:—

"‘There is a time to keep silence,’ saith Solomon (III. 7). But when I proceeded to the first verse of the fourth chapter of the Ecclesiastes, ‘and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; beheld the tears of such as are oppressed, and they have had no comforter; and on the side of the oppressors there was power,’ I concluded this was not the time to keep silence; for Truth should be spoken at all times, but more especially at those times when to speak Truth is dangerous.”²

¹ Enders, "Luthers Briefwechsel," Vol. VII, p. 338.

² "Life of Whittier," by Mrs. King Lewis.

The words, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time" (III. 11), have turned the thoughts of many towards the sunlight.

"Trust me, scholar," says Isaak Walton, "I have caught many a trout in a particular meadow, that the very shape and the enamelled colour of him hath been such as have joyed me to look on him: and I have then with much pleasure concluded with Solomon, 'Everything is beautiful in his season'."

Ruskin wrote that in the forest of Fontainebleau he had found himself "lying on the bank of a cart-road in the sand, with no prospect whatever but a small aspen tree against the blue sky. Languidly but not idly, I began to draw it; and as I drew the languor passed away; the beautiful lines insisted on being traced. . . . With wonder increasing every instant, I saw that they 'composed' themselves by finer laws than any known of men. 'He hath made everything beautiful in his time,' became for me thenceforward the interpretation of the bond between the human mind and all visible things, and I returned along the wood-road feeling that it had led me far."¹

Harriet Martineau wrote in girlhood of a sermon preached from this text:—

"O this sermon! The text was, 'He hath made everything beautiful in his time,' and after the adaptations in the beautiful objects of nature were pointed out, we had the whole survey of all the principal religions in the world, with suggestions that each was beautiful in its time, and that there is *one* whose time of ceasing to be beautiful can never arrive."

With the vision of joy in nature, the Preacher blends that of joy in honest labour (v. 19). As an example of this, Melancthon quoted to his students the case of the Wittenberg painter, Luke Cranach, who worked hard even in old age:—

"Our Luke," he said, "is in the seventies, yet he paints the whole day. When at home, he got up in the morning before any of the servants, and he painted in the evening by lamplight. Such diligence was to him the greatest pleasure. Do you fancy it is a trouble to Stigelius to compose verses? To you and me it is a trouble, but to him it is as natural as for a bird to

¹ E. T. Cook, "The Life of Ruskin," Vol. I, pp. 126, 127.

fly; according to the saying: 'Weapons are no burden to Mars'."¹

The pure happiness of youth is expressed in the words "Let thy garments be always white" (ix. 8).

Bunyan describes as follows the leavetaking of Christiana at the gate of the House Beautiful:—

"Then said Christiana to the porter, Sir, I am much obliged to you for all the kindnesses that you have showed to me since I came hither, and also that you have been so loving and kind to my children: I know not how to gratify your kindness; wherefore, pray, as a token of my respect to you, accept of this small mite. So she put a gold angel into his hand; and he made her a low obeisance, and said, 'Let thy garments be always white, and let thy head want no ointment'. Let Mercy live and not die, and let not her works be few. And to the boys he said, 'Do you flee youthful lusts, and follow after godliness with them that are grave and wise; so shall you put gladness into your mother's heart, and obtain praise of all that are sober-minded'. So they thanked the porter and departed."

Margaret Gladstone (afterwards Mrs. Ramsay Macdonald) describes a baptismal service at St. Mary Abbot's Church, Kensington, in May, 1887.

"Mr. Glyn read the service so impressively and kindly, and each of us stepped up in turn to be sprinkled and signed with the water. At the close of the service Mr. Glyn told us two mottoes that he wanted to give us: 'Let your garments be always white' (Eccles. ix. 8), and 'They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy' (Rev. iii. 4)." Later, there is an interpolated note in the diary: "I forgot to say that after Mr. Glyn had given us these mottoes he gave each of us one of the pure white eucharist lilies off the font as a remembrance of the service, and said he would like us to keep them always. I had mine in water in our bedroom for some days, and when it began to fade I pressed it." Her husband wrote, "When she was gone, and I had to look through the pathetic little treasures which she had kept sacred from destruction, I found it, dead, brown, without fragrance,

¹ From a manuscript collection of Melancthon's stories in the Town Library at Leipzig, quoted by Prof. Kroker in his essay "Anekdoten Melancthons und Leipzig" (1911)

a sorry emblem of the purity that decays. It bloomed in her heart".¹

The joy of national service is felt also on the sunny upland slopes of the Preacher's pilgrimage.

Dr. Taylor Innes says of Mr. Gladstone :—

"Up to the age of twenty-two he was like a hundred other lads around him. From that age till he died at eighty-nine, he lived in the lavish expenditure of power generated in him by one year—perhaps one hour—of conviction. But that force was a moral force; and for seventy years thereafter it poured itself with amazing volume into each new channel of opportunity which seemed to him a path of duty—much as if his chief aim in life had been the ancient indiscriminating exhortation—'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might' " (ix. 10).²

The word "Remember" (xii. 1) is a message to youth.

Mr. George Russell, in his short biography of Canon Liddon, describes a sermon by the great preacher, from this text, addressed to the boys of Harrow School on Founder's Day, 1868.

"The text is announced—'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them' (xii. 1). Thirty-seven years have sped their course, and the echoes of that sermon still quiver in the ear of memory. . . . We are listening, for the first time in our lives, to a man inspired. . . . He leans far out from the pulpit, spreading himself, as it were, over the congregation, in an act of benediction. 'From this place may Christ ever be preached in the fullness of His creative, redemptive, and sacramental work. Here may you learn to remember Him in the days of your youth; and in the last and most awful day of all may He remember you.' "

William Wilberforce wrote in 1822 to his seventeen-year-old son Samuel: "I am always tempted to conclude my letters with Charles I's last word, *Remember*, which may naturally be supposed to refer to whatever the speaker is known to have most desired to live in the recollection of the person addressed. My dearest Samuel will know what *my* 'Remember' means."

¹ "Margaret Ethel Macdonald," p. 46.

² "Chapters of Reminiscence," pp. 173, 174.

XII. 13.—*Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*

On the white marble which covers the tomb of John Evelyn in Wotton Church, we read these words: "He fell asleep the 27th day of February 170⁵, being the 86th year of his age, in full hope of a glorious resurrection, through faith in Jesus Christ. Living in an age of extraordinary events and revolutions, he learnt (as himself asserted) this truth—which, pursuant to his intention is here declared,—‘That all is vanity which is not honest, and that there is no solid wisdom but in real piety’."

Lady Lawrence said of her husband, the great Indian administrator: "His religious faith was the most beautiful and simple I have ever known. ‘Fear God and keep His commandments’ was the rule of his daily life. We used to read the Bible together every day, and I have now by me the large print volumes he used latterly, with his marks at the different passages which particularly interested him."

¹

The closing verses of Ecclesiastes call to mind a scene in Strassburg Cathedral in November, 1478, when Jean Geiler of Kaysersberg preached the funeral sermon for Bishop Robert. Before him sat the new Bishop, Albert, cousin of the late prelate, and a crowd of nobles and ecclesiastics. Geiler praised the dead man's virtues, but his keen sense of duty did not permit him to waste his eloquence on mere generalities. With a realism that must have startled the audience, he summoned the ghost of the dead Bishop to a solemn religious colloquy. Questions and answers were made to pass between them. The once proud and wealthy ruler confessed, as if in his own person, the vanity of riches, luxury, and lordly birth. The one advantage this world possesses, he declared, is that from it leads the way to a blessed eternity, if man will keep to the right path. "And what is that path?" Geiler questioned. "Fear God, and keep His commandments," replied through his lips the voice from the tomb, "for this is the whole duty of man."

²

¹ R. Bosworth Smith, "Life of Lord Lawrence," Vol. II, p. 374.

² See the standard French "Life of Geiler," by the Abbé Dacheux, p. 35.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

THE Book of Canticles, mystically interpreted, lies, as Bunyan would say, "like a glowing coal" at the heart of the Church. The Bibles of St. Bernard of Clairvaux and St. Thomas Aquinas, like that of Robert Murray McCheyne,¹ must have been blackened with use at the Song of Songs. "Open your mouths," St. Bernard cried to his monks, "not for milk, but for bread. With Solomon there is bread, and that full beautiful and savoury; I mean the Book which is entitled the 'Song of Songs'; let it be brought forth and broken."²

St. Catherine of Egypt, Ruskin suggests, was for the Mediæval Church the type of the Bride in the song, "involved with an ideal of all that is purest in the life of a nun, and brightest in the death of a martyr. It is scarcely possible," he adds, "to overrate the influence of the conceptions formed of her, in ennobling the sentiments of Christian women of the higher orders."

The standard Spanish edition of the writings of St. John of the Cross, which has a careful text-index, mentions over seventy references to the Song, though there is not one to the 53rd of Isaiah.³

Lines from Canticles were associated in ancient times with the purest family joys. "Draw me, we will run after thee," says the inspired writer.

Principal Lindsay quotes from the Scottish version of an early Christmas hymn:—

¹ Cf. for McCheyne, Prof. Alex. R. Gordon, "The Poets of the Old Testament," pp. 311, 312.

² J. Cotter Morison, "Life and Times of St. Bernard," p. 177.

³ "Obras Espirituales de San Juan de la Cruz," 2 vols. (Madrid, 1872).

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

“ O Jesu parvule,
I thirst sair after Thee ;
Comfort my hart and mind,
O Puer optime !
God of all grace so kind,
Et Princeps gloriæ,
Trahe me post Te,
Trahe me post Te ! ” ¹

The words of the next verse, “ As the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon,” are associated with an ancient record of brotherly love. St. Bernard preached from this text, in the course of his exposition of the Song of Songs immediately after the death of his brother Gerard, and paid a fond tribute to his memory.

“ The habitation of the body,” he said, “ is not the mansion of the citizen, nor the house of the native, but either the soldier’s tent or the traveller’s inn. This body, I say, is a tent, and a tent of Kedar, because, by its interference, it prevents the soul from beholding the infinite light, nor does it allow her to see the light at all, except through a glass darkly and not face to face. Do you not see whence blackness comes to the Church—whence a certain rust cleaves even to the fairest souls? Doubtless, it comes from the tents of Kedar, from the practice of laborious warfare, from the long continuance of a peaceful sojourn, from the straits of our grievous exile, from our feeble cumbersome bodies; for the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things.” ²

In the first verse of Chapter II we have words applied through many ages to the Saviour of the world : “ I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys ”. One of Samuel Rutherford’s hearers confessed that he thought his minister “ would have flown out of the pulpit when he came to speak of Christ, the Rose of Sharon ”. In ancient Egypt and in Greece the rose was the token of silence. It appeared with the cross as the device of Luther, and the symbol of the Rosicrucians (*sub rosa crux*). “ The Arabs

¹ “ History of the Reformation,” Vol. I, p. 123.

² J. Cotter Morison, “ Life and Times of St Bernard,” p. 228.

have a legend of a garden of mystical roses once planted by King Shaddad, and now lost and buried in the desert. The Chinese plant it over graves, and it was a frequent emblem on Greek and Roman tombs. The reverence with which the Jews spoke of the 'Rose of Sharon' is repeated in the esteem of their descendants for the 'rose of Jericho'—which, from its ability to recover life after apparent death, is the natural emblem of the Resurrection."¹

THE LILY OF THE VALLEYS.

With St. Matt. vi. 28.—*Consider the lilies of the field.*

In "The Book of Thel," William Blake makes the lily of the valley talk:—

"I am a watery weed,
And I am very small, and love to dwell in lowly vales;
So weak, the gilded butterfly scarce perches on my head.
Yet I am visited from heaven; and He that smiles on all
Walks in the valley, and each morn over me spreads His hand,
Saying, 'Rejoice, thou humble grass, thou low-born lily flower,
Thou gentle maid, of silent valleys and of modest brooks;
For thou shalt be clothed in light, and fed with morning manna,
Till summer's heat melts thee beside the fountains and the
springs,
To flourish in eternal vales'."

II. 3.—*As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.*

The blossoming of the Apple Tree represented for Dante the Transfiguration of our Lord.²

Savonarola, in George Eliot's novel, closes his memorable first interview with Romola in these words: "I desire to behold you among the feebler and more ignorant sisters as the apple-tree among the trees of the forest, so that your fairness and all natural gifts may be but as a lamp through which the Divine light shines the more purely".

II. 10.—*Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.*

¹ Moncure D. Conway, "Fraser's Magazine," 1870, pp. 713, 714.

² "Purgatorio," canto xxxii. See W. W. Vernon, "Readings on the Purgatorio," Vol. II, pp. 583, 584.

"Hark, how the dear immortall dove
 Sighes to his sylver mate, rise up, my love!
 Rise up, my fair, my spotlesse one!
 The winter's past, the rain is gone.
 The spring is come, the flowers appear.
 No sweets, but thou, art wanting here.
 Come away, my love!
 Come away, my dove! cast off delay,
 The court of heav'n is come
 To wait upon thee home; Come, come away!
 The flowers appear
 Or quickly would, wert thou once here."

—RICHARD CRASHAW.

[See also Miss Rossetti's transcendent "Passing Away"].

II. 12.—*The voice of the turtle is heard in our land.*

J. M. Neale says, in one of his sermons for Sisters:—

"Often and often I showed you, in the Book of Canticles, how all things that the Bridegroom has are the Bride's also; how it is her garden as well as His, in which He walks; how it is her land as well as His, into which she is called: 'the voice of the turtle is heard in *our* land'."

As an example of Puritan use of the Song we may take Bunyan's words in "Grace Abounding". He tells us that "when comforting-time was come" he heard one preach a sermon on these words in the Song: "Behold, thou art fair, my love, behold thou art fair" [iv. 1]. But at that time he made these two words, *my love*, his chief and subject matter, from which, after he had a little opened the text, he observed these several conclusions:—

"1. That the Church, and so every saved soul, is Christ's love, when loveless.

"2. Christ's love without a cause.

"3. Christ's love when hated of the world.

"4. Christ's love when under temptation and under destruction.

"5. Christ's love, from first to last.

But I got nothing of what he said at present; only when he came to the application of the fourth particular, this was the word he said: If it be so that the saved soul is Christ's love,

when under temptation and desertion, then, poor tempted soul, when thou art assaulted and afflicted with temptations, and the hidings of God's face, yet think on these two words, 'My love' still."

The joy of this thought, as he tells in later paragraphs, made Bunyan's heart "full of comfort and hope".

The whole of this book in its mystical interpretation, was very dear to Bunyan. In the preface to "Grace Abounding" he wrote: "Children, grace be with you. Amen. I being taken from you in presence, and so tied up that I cannot perform that duty, that from God doth lie upon me to you-ward, for your farther edifying and building up in faith and holiness, etc., yet that you may see my soul hath fatherly care and desire after your spiritual and everlasting welfare, I now once again, as before, from the top of *Shenir* and *Hermon*, so now from *the lions' dens*, from *the mountains of the leopards* (IV. 8) do look yet after you all, greatly longing to see your safe arrival into *the desired Haven*."

IV. 8.—*Come with me from Lebanon.*

Before the descent of Beatrice into the chariot of the Church ("Purgatorio," canto xxx.), the elder who represents the writings of Solomon cries three times, "Veni, sponsa, de Libano," "Come, O Bride, from Lebanon," all the others repeating it after him.

V. 2.—*I sleep, but my heart waketh.*

Father Tyrrell wrote: "I am no dualist and hold with St. Paul that when one member suffers all the others suffer with it; and that, therefore, my will and reason make common cause with my digestion. To-day the cloud lifts, but as to yesterday, I could not accuse myself of a single act that could be accounted voluntary by a sane psychologist. The brute mechanism of habit carries one respectably through such days, if nothing unwonted occurs to tax one's dormant reason and will and prove them fast asleep. I can only hope that one may in some sense say, 'Ego dormio sed cor meum vigilat'; that there is a deep self that never sleeps and never dies; and that He who sees that watchful heart and not merely the slumbering eyes, will judge us (as we should judge one another) by what we say and do when we are at our best, not when we are at our worst."

"Our collects have among them but one speech and language;

and this is the confession of natural weakness, joined with the reliance upon supernatural help. 'O God, forasmuch as without Thee we are not able to please Thee, mercifully grant that Thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.' When I consider these inspired prayers, and remember how long they have been the life-breath of our National Church, I can but compare her with the Bride in Canticles, who said, 'I sleep, but my heart waketh'."—DORA GREENWELL.

v. 2.—*My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of night.*

"Dear night! this world's defeat;
The stop to busie fools; care's check and curb;
The day of Spirits; my soul's calm retreat
Which none disturb!

Christ's progress and His prayer time;
The hours to which high Heaven doth chime.

God's silent, searching flight:
When my Lord's head is filled with dew, and all
His locks are wet with the clear drops of night;
His still, soft call;
His knocking time; the soul's dumb watch,
When spirits their Fair kindred catch."

—HENRY VAUGHAN.

vi. 3.—*He feedeth among the lilies.*

Bunyan tells us that Christian and Hopeful passed through a tree-shaded meadow through which flowed a pleasant river. The meadow was curiously beautiful with lilies; and it was green all the year long. In this meadow they lay down and slept; for here they might lie down safely. When they awoke they gathered again of the fruit of the trees, and drank again of the water of the river, and then lay down again to sleep. This they did several days and nights.

viii. 5.—*Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?*

"Let us consider the slow, the uneven, the painful advance of the Mystic Spouse: she that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon the arm of her Beloved, and we shall see that she,

like her Lord, is wounded in her heart, her hands and her feet."

—DORA GREENWELL.¹

VIII. 6.—*Set me as a seal upon thine heart.*

In the Life of G. F. Watts we are told that in an old desk once the property of his father, George Watts, there lies a little agate seal, upon which may be seen very unskilfully engraved, evidently by no professional hand, the symbol of a rising sun. Knowing that the father's inventive turn of mind led him to lose time by taking up too many arts and crafts, it may not be too fanciful to suggest that this attempt at engraving was by his own hand, and that the little seal bears in its device something very personal connected with this hope of his later years—the son whom he had certainly "set as a seal upon his heart".²

VIII. 6.—*Jealousy is cruel as the grave.*

Thackeray says in "Esmond": "In the presence of Death, that sovereign ruler, a woman's coquetry is scared, and her jealousy will hardly pass the boundaries of that grim kingdom. 'Tis entirely of the earth that passion, and expires in the cold blue air beyond our sphere."

VIII. 6.—*Love is strong as death.*

Sir Walter Scott, in "The Bride of Lammermoor," applies this text to fatherly love. A savage bull in the Chase of Ravenswood pursues Sir William Ashton and his daughter Lucy. "Assailed by a danger so imminent, firmer courage than that of the Lord Keeper might have given way. But paternal tenderness, 'love strong as death,' sustained him. He continued to support and drag onward his daughter, until, her fears altogether depriving her of the power of flight, she sunk down by his side; and when he could no longer assist her to escape, he turned round and placed himself between her and the raging animal, which, advancing in full career, its brutal fury enhanced by the pursuit, was now within a few yards of them." Lucy, as we remember, was saved by the Master of Ravenswood.

¹ "The Patience of Hope."

² Vol. I, p. 9.

THE PROPHETS.

"We praise Him for the Prophets and their hope."—BISHOP
LANCELOT ANDREWES.

"Let us, like St. Peter, cast ourselves into the sea of prophecy, if, like him, we may but get to Jesus on the shore."—
J. M. NEALE.

Thy eagle-sighted prophets too,
—Which were Thy Church's organs, and did sound
That harmony which made of two
One law, and did unite, but not confound.

—JOHN DONNE.

"What a beautiful sermon or essay," said Coleridge, "might be written on the growth of prophecy! from the germ, no bigger than a man's hand, in Genesis, till the column of cloud gathers size and height and substance, and assumes the shape of a perfect man; just like the smoke in the Arabian Nights' tale, which comes up and at last takes a genie's shape."

"Prophecy," says a German scholar of to-day, "is like the rosy dawn, which ushers in the day. The prophetic word is 'a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts' (2 Peter i. 19). Prophecy is as trustworthy as the dawn, which certainly kisses the hem of the sun's robe. Moreover, were there no dawn there would be no day, and the soft glow of the morning red prepares the eye for the brighter light, and cheers the heart that yearns for the day. But the rosy hue of morning is not the blazing day-star itself. Aurora pales when the monarch Sun assumes his radiant sway."¹

On the memorial window dedicated to Frederick Robertson of Brighton in Brasenose College Chapel, Oxford, these words are inscribed above on a scroll: "*Te Deum laudat Prophetarum laudabilis numerus*" ("The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise Thee").

Pascal said that the prophecies are the greatest proofs of Jesus Christ.

¹ E. König, "The Exile's Book of Consolation," translated by Prof. J. A. Selbie (1899), p. 205.

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.

“Rapt Isaiah’s wild seraphic fire.”—ROBERT BURNS.

AMONG the lovers of Isaiah we may name Coleridge and Matthew Arnold.

Coleridge called Isaiah his ideal of the Hebrew prophet. He studied that part of Scripture “with unremitting attention and most reverential admiration”. He could repeat a good deal of Isaiah by heart, and he delighted in pointing out the hexametrical rhythm of numerous passages in the English version.

Sara Coleridge shared her father’s admiration for this prophet. “I believe,” she wrote, “that Isaiah and Ezekiel sought to excel as poets, all the more that their poetry was the vehicle of Divine truth, of truth awakened in their souls by inspiration.”

From Arnold this testimony may be quoted :—

“I rate the value of the operation of poetry and literature upon men’s minds extremely high; and from no poetry and literature, not even from our own Shakespeare and Milton, great as they are and our own as they are, have I, for my own part, received so much delight and stimulus as from Homer and Isaiah.”¹

With these words compare the tribute of Dora Greenwell to the prophet :—

“Often would Philip draw my attention to a fact which had already become deeply significant to my own mind, the scope which prophecy, especially that of Isaiah, gives to man’s craving for natural delight. It is *beauty* which Isaiah promises, beauty in exchange for ashes; it is not mere sufficiency which he foretells for Christ’s peaceable kingdom, but wealth, exuberance, feasts of fat things, of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined. It is

¹ “Isaiah of Jerusalem.”

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

the rose with which the wilderness is to rejoice and blossom, the myrtle which is to succeed the thorn, plants merely fair and sweet and gracious, ministering only to delight.”¹

When John Coleridge Patteson, the missionary Bishop of Melanesia, undertook his last voyage of supervision among the islands—a voyage which ended with his martyrdom in September, 1871—he was studying on board the schooner the Book of Isaiah with the help of Dr. Delitzsch’s Commentary, regarding which he wrote before on one occasion, “Delitzsch helps me much in Isaiah”. His last letter speaks at the close about this Commentary and Biblical Criticism.

One of William Blake’s disciples said that to walk with him was like “walking with the prophet Isaiah”.

Sechele, one of Dr. Livingstone’s African chiefs, was much impressed with the character and writings of Isaiah.

Madame Bunsen, as a young wife living in exile, found comfort in the prophets. She wrote to her mother, Mrs. Waddington, from Rome in 1817, that she had been reading in regular progress through Job and Ezekiel. “The reason that caused me to begin the latter, was hearing from Charles [her husband] a comment M. Niebuhr had made on the thoroughly Judaic spirit, and narrowness of mind of Ezekiel, as contrasted with Isaiah. I think very likely the observation is just, but I believe the reason I have always felt and my mother has always felt, so much delight in reading Isaiah, is that in speaking of the future Redeemer, his soul seems filled with His actual presence, and He has almost imbibed beforehand the spirit of Christianity—he is not a mere passive medium for the transmission of Divine oracles.”²

“Isaiah,” says Prof. S. R. Driver, “realized in anticipation the noble ideal of a single-hearted statesman sketched four centuries afterwards by the Athenian patriot Demosthenes: “To discern events in their beginnings, to be beforehand in the detection of movements and tendencies, and to forewarn his countrymen accordingly: to fight against the political vices from which no State is free, of procrastination, supineness, ignorance, and

¹ “Colloquia Crucis.”

² “Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen,” by Augustus J. C. Hare, Vol. I, p. 123.

party-jealousy: to impress upon all the paramount importance of unity and friendly feeling, and the duty of providing promptly for their country's needs".

Dr. Driver quotes an ancient Hebrew saying that whoever sees Isaiah in a dream may look for consolation.

I.—Matthew Arnold wrote to his mother on 24 December, 1868, a few days after the death of his eldest boy at Harrow:—

"Tommy's death in particular was associated with several awakening and epoch-making things. The chapter for the day of his death was that great chapter, the first of Isaiah; the first Sunday after his death was Advent Sunday, with its glorious collect, and in the Epistle the passage which converted St. Augustine (Rom. xiii. 13). All these things point to a new beginning, yet it may well be that I am near my end, as papa was at my age [forty-six], but without papa's ripeness, and that there will be little time to carry far the new beginning. But that is all the more reason for carrying it as far as one can, and as earnestly as one can, while one lives."¹

I. 23.—*Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves.*

Dante places five citizens of Florence among the Thieves in the *Inferno*. "His irony," says Dr. Carroll, "has a central core of sorrow—sorrow such as wrung tears from the prophets of Israel, foreseeing in the general corruption of the nation their country's doom. He seems to have had specially before his mind one line of Isaiah in his lament over the fall of 'the faithful city,' 'Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves'. For this is the point of the words, 'Among the thieves I found five such thy citizens'. 'Five *such*': not one of them sprung from the scum of the people, but every man sprung from the noblest families in Florence. What hope was there for a city whose very princes were thieves and companions of thieves?"¹

II. 4.—*They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks.*

At the Guildhall Peace meeting, held on 28 April, 1911, the Chief Rabbi (Dr. Adler) said: "The one aspiration which

¹ "Letters of Matthew Arnold," Vol. I, p. 401 (1895).

² "Exiles of Eternity," p. 358.

ran like a golden thread through the Hebrew Scriptures was a striving to uphold and attain the great blessing of peace, and the one aspiration which at all times enthusiastically moved the Hebrew prophets of old was that the Almighty might speed the time when men would beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, when nations should not rise up against nations, neither should they learn war any more."

II. 5.—*Let us walk in the light of the Lord.*

These words, in German, are inscribed on the tomb of Baron Charles von Bunsen at Bonn.

v.—"Of songs of labour," says Prof. A. R. Gordon, "those relating to the culture of the vine fill the largest place. The happy choruses of the vine-dressers are distinctly recalled in Isaiah's song of the vineyard (ch. v.), which no doubt takes its form from these. So also in Isaiah xvi. 10 the stern shout of battle is pictured as breaking in upon the joyous singing of the labourers in the vineyard and the wine-press, making the vintage 'shout' to cease."¹

VI. 2.—*Above it stood the seraphims.*

In the hierarchy of Dante's Heaven, "the Seraphim are the nearest God, as close as a halo to the moon. Dante sees them in Paradise as a circle of fire, and calls them

'Those flames devout,

Which of their six wings make themselves a cowl,'—referring to the six wings with which Isaiah saw the Seraphim cover themselves before the Lord. The word Seraph was believed to mean burning, aglow with the Love of God; hence Aquinas says: 'The name of Seraphim is not given from love alone, but from excess of love, which the name of heat or burning implies'. In early art, this symbolism was indicated by painting the wings of the Seraphim a glowing colour, 'celestial rosy-red, Love's proper hue,' as Milton says of Raphael's smile."²

VI. 2.—*Each one had six wings.*

Milton paraphrases this passage in his description of Raphael's journey to Eden:—

¹ "The Poets of the Old Testament," p. 24.

² J. S. Carroll, "Exiles of Eternity," p. 468.

“ At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise
 He lights ; and to his proper shape returns
 A seraph winged ; six wings he wore, to shade
 His lineaments divine ; the pair that clad
 Each shoulder, broad, came mantling o’er his breast
 With regal ornament ; the middle pair
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold,
 And colours dipt in heaven : the third his feet
 Shadowed from either heel with feather’d mail,
 Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia’s son he stood
 And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill’d
 The circuit wide.” ¹

VI. 6.—*Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar.*

“ Oh, blessed be that hand which fetched a coal, and kindled a fire in our dead hearts from that same altar where we must offer our sacrifice everlastingly.”—RICHARD BAXTER.

VI. 8.—*Whom shall I send, and who will go for us ?*

Donald Cargill, lecturing on this chapter, dwelt especially on the words, “ Whom shall I send, and who will go for us ? ” He said : “ To speak with holy reverence, we see that the Trinity of Heaven may be at a stand, where to get a fit messenger to carry the message ; the prophet said, ‘ Here am I ; send me ’. ’Tis like, if he had known what he was to do, he would not have been so forward ; for, if an honest-hearted minister might refuse any errand that God sent him, it would be to denounce judgments upon a people, especially spiritual ; but the hand of God was here ; and when he got his commission to preach to the people, and they grew more and more deaf and blind, he cried out, ‘ How long ? ’ and the answer was returned, ‘ Until the city be without inhabitants, and the land utterly desolate ’. After he had insisted a little in explaining these words, he said, groaning deeply, ‘ If he knew anything of the mind of God, this is the commission that we are getting, and the commission that ministers will get, to preach the greater part of the generation more

¹ “ Paradise Lost,” Book V.

and more deaf and blind. And preach who will, and pray who will, this deafness and this blindness shall remain until many habitable places of Scotland shall be as waste and desolate as those mountains (looking to them with a very weary countenance). . . . He went on to the following verse, 'Yet in it shall be a tenth, who shall be as the oak, which hath the substance in the root'. And from that he asserted that as the Lord had preserved a remnant through all the periods of the Church, so he would preserve a remnant that would ride out all these winter storms."¹

VI. 8.—*Here am I ; send me.*

Frances Willard wrote at the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861 :—

"There is but one voice all over the North, and that is, 'Here am I ; send me'."

VII. 14.—*His name Immanuel* (with St. Matt. I. 23.—*They shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us*).

Carlyle wrote to Emerson: "My brave Father, now victorious from his toil, was wont to pray in evening worship; 'Might we say, We are not alone, for God is with us !' Amen ! Amen !"

VIII. 10-14.—Cromwell wrote to Oliver St. John in 1648: "Our rest we expect elsewhere; that will be durable. Care we not for to-morrow, nor for anything. This Scripture has been of great stay to me: read Isaiah VIII. 10, 11, 14—read the whole chapter."

Carlyle has the following note: "Yes, the indignant symbolic 'Chapter' about Maher-shalal-hash-baz, and the vain desires of the wicked, is all worth reading; here are the three verses referred to, more especially 'Take counsel together' ye unjust, 'and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us.—Sanctify the Lord of Hosts; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem! And many among them shall stumble,

¹ "Six Saints of the Covenant," Vol. II, pp. 40, 41.

and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.' This last verse, we find, is often in the thoughts of Oliver."¹

IX. 5.—*For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.*

(R.V.).—*For all the armour of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire.*

On this verse, which occurs in the first Lesson for Christmas Day, Matthew Arnold wrote:—

"No one of us understands clearly what this means, and indeed a clear meaning is not to be got out of the words, which are a mistranslation. Yet they delight the ear and they move us. Prof. Robertson Smith brings an amended translation: 'For the greaves of the warrior that stampeth in the fray, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be cast into the fire as fuel for the flame.' Yes, we understand; but the charm of the thing is rudely shaken. Mr. Cheyne brings us a translation more close and correct still: 'For every boot of him that trampleth noisily, and the cloak rolled in blood, are for burning, the fuel of fire'. The charm has altogether vanished, if we receive these words to supersede the old words: the charm has vanished, never to return."²

IX. 9.—*Unto us a child is born.*

This is the Christmas text of the Old Testament, and it gleams in many biographies.

Mr. Alexander Macmillan, the publisher, wrote to Mrs. Alexander in 1867, soon after he had lost his youngest and dearly loved son: "Of the historical Child of Bethlehem and the many children who foreshadowed His coming, what lessons could be read, by the simple statement of the facts! This was the idea I had, and for the title simply 'the Child: a Book for the Birthday of our Lord'. My ideal plan was to take, say, an English family where a dear little one may have been lost. Gather the family round the Christmas hearth, and let the talk linger about the Cradle of Bethlehem and the light thrown over the child's grave by the cradle. Then the father, or the mother, would

¹ "Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches."

² "Isaiah of Jerusalem," pp. 2, 3.

begin and tell the story of all the children in the Bible and the promise and hope which gather round each. Begin with the first even : the promise of seed to Eve and of how hope in that promise is not of none effect or quenched because of the sad ends. If darkened there, yet fresh light, I hope, comes from the bright face of the new Child."

IX. 6.—*His name shall be called Wonderful.*

Dora Greenwell remarks on this text :—

"In the life and death and rising again of Him who shall be called Wonderful, the chain of the habitual, the accustomed, is broken, and yet there is no sense of disturbance or confusion, the soul finds itself still among facts, facts of a new, supernatural order, and upon these its new life is based. The supernatural man is only the Rational man at a higher level. He is . . . eminently the practical man, practical in a wider area, one for whom the range of life and reality has been extended by the taking of the manhood unto God."¹

IX. 6.—*The Prince of Peace.*

Dr. John Brown tells us of his father's love for Isaiah. "Isaiah was his masterpiece, and I remember quite well his startling us all when reading at family worship, 'His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God,' by a peremptory, explosive sharpness, as of thunder overhead, at the words 'the mighty God,' similar to the rendering now given to Handel's music, and doubtless so meant by him, and then closing with 'the Prince of Peace,' soft and low. No man who wishes to feel Isaiah as well as understand him, should be ignorant of Handel's 'Messiah'."²

IX. 10.—*The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones ; the sycomores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars.*

Erskine of Linlathen wrote from Rome in 1824 :—

"The place from which I write is just a mighty monument of the uncertainty of human things—it is a home for the afflicted and ruined and disappointed ; for here they will see the traces of a heavier affliction and a deeper and more widely extended ruin, and a more unlooked-for blight than their own. Here they do

¹ "Two Friends."

² "Horæ Subsecivæ," note to the "Letter to John Cairns, D.D."

not see the tombs of individuals but of empires—they walk over the ashes of all that this world has produced of mighty, and glorious, and enduring, of cheerful and prosperous; and they may thus have the consolation of thinking that, when they suffer, they only share the common inheritance of man. Thank God, we have better and more solid consolation than the mere knowledge that we have the whole of our race, past and present, as our companions in sorrow. We have learned that according to the plans of Divine wisdom, sorrow is the seed of joy, and that out of the fragments of this life a higher life is to be formed.”

x. 2, 3.—These verses were chosen by General Grant, when he kissed the Bible on taking the oath as President of the United States.

x. 30.—*Lift up thy voice, O daughter of Gallim; cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anathoth.*

The word Anathoth means “answers”. Gilbert White of Selborne, in a letter on echoes, says: “This village is another Anathoth, a place of responses or echoes”.

xi. 6.—*A little child shall lead them.*

“‘A little child shall lead them,’ this, it seems to me, is the password into this kingdom of greatness and simplicity. All other ideals draw away the heart from real life; the poet, the artist, is continually trying to break out of the narrow circle of visible things; he ‘asks for better bread than can be made with wheat’. The Christian ideal alone meets the habitual, the practical; *meets it while immeasurably transcending it; embraces it and walks with it hand in hand.*”¹

xi. 6, 7.—*The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb . . . and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.*

“And there the lion’s ruddy eyes
 Shall flow with tears of gold:
 And pitying the tender cries,
 And walking round the fold:
 Saying, ‘Wrath by His meekness
 And, by His health, sickness,
 Are driven away
 From our immortal day.

¹ Dora Greenwell.

‘ And now beside thee, bleating lamb,
 I can lie down and sleep,
 Or think on Him Who bore thy name,
 Graze after thee, and weep.
 For, washed in life’s river,
 My bright mane for ever
 Shall shine like the gold
 As I guard o’er the fold ’.”

—WILLIAM BLAKE.

XI. 9.—*They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.*

In “Paradise Lost,” Book XI. Adam points out to Eve the ominous sight of the eagle chasing “two birds of gayest plume,” and the gentle Hart and Hind pursued by their enemy. Wordsworth was thinking of these lines when he wrote in his poem, “The Redbreast Chasing the Butterfly” :—

“ Could Father Adam open his eyes
 And see this sight beneath the skies,
 He’d wish to close them again.”

Gilbert White of Selborne wrote in 1773 :—

“ Navigators mention that in the Isle of Ascension and such other desolate districts, birds are so little acquainted with the human form that they settle on men’s shoulders ; and have no more dread of a sailor than they would have of a goat that was grazing.”

XI. 13.—*Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.*

“ Already we are beginning to attach a spiritual meaning to the prophecy, ‘ Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim ’ ; to look forward to a time when enmity *within* God’s Kingdom shall so far cease as to allow the kindred zeal of His people, zeal which is but love under its more ardent aspect, to be turned against the common enemies of their King, and to find there its triumphs. ‘ They shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the west ; they shall spoil them of the east altogether ; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon shall obey them ’.”—DORA GREENWELL.¹

¹ “ The Patience of Hope.”

xii. 2.—*I will trust, and not be afraid.*

Bishop King of Lincoln inscribed on the first page of his diary for 1910 the words: "I will trust and not be afraid". He passed away early in March. On the eve of his last birthday he wrote: "We must keep quietly to the old ways and trust. The great comfort is knowing that the Church and the world are both under the eye and control of our Blessed Lord. He is Head over all and over the Church; our only anxiety should be to know and do His will, then calmly, thankfully, lovingly to trust."

In the privately printed *Memoirs of Bishop Collins of Gibraltar*, we are told that he marked the last bit of "The Collar," which was his favourite among George Herbert's poems:—

"Tie up thy fears,
He that forbears
To suit and serve his need
Deserves his load.
But as I raved, and grew more fierce and wild,
At every word,
Methought I heard one calling, *Child*,
And I replied, *My Lord*."

xiii. 12.—*I will make a man more precious than fine gold.*

"Because we believe in Man; because we reason, if not always aright, of truth, of beauty, of perfection, and are full of reverence, full of pity for the nature in which we find ourselves so fearfully and wonderfully fashioned, because our age, with all its wants and errors, is still a loving, a believing, an essentially *human* age, there shall yet come to pass concerning it the saying which is written: 'In that day shall a *Man* be more precious than gold, than the golden wedge of Ophir'."—DORA GREENWELL.¹

xiv. 9.—*Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming.*

In his essay on Dr. Chalmers in "*Horæ Subsecivæ*," Dr. John Brown says:—

"Every one must have trembled when reading that passage in Isaiah, in which Hell is described as moved to meet Lucifer

¹ "The Patience of Hope."

at his coming; there is not in human language anything more sublime in conception, more exquisite in expression; it has on it the light of the terrible crystal. But may we not reverse the scene? May we not imagine, when a great and good man, a son of the morning, enters on his rest, that Heaven would move itself to meet him at his coming? That it would stir up its dead, even all the chief ones of the earth, and that the kings of the earth would arise each one from their throne to welcome their brother? that those who saw him would 'narrowly consider him,' and say, 'is this he who moved nations, enlightened and bettered his fellows, and whom the great Taskmaster welcomes with a "well done!"'?"

XIV. 12.—*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!*

In Mrs. Browning's "Drama of Exile" Lucifer says:—

"Good and fair
He did create me!—ask Him, if not fair!
Ask, if I caught not fair and silvery
His blessing for chief angels on my head
Until it grew there, a crown crystallized!
Ask, if He never called me by my name,
Lucifer—kindly said as 'Gabriel'—
Lucifer—soft as 'Michael'! while serene
I, standing in the glory of the lamps,
Answered 'My Father' innocent of shame
And of the sense of thunder."

XIV. 13.—In the thirteenth century the desk (ambone) for holding the gospels was usually placed on the south side of the nave, in order, as Pope Innocent III said, that the reader should speak towards the north against Lucifer, who said "he would sit in the sides of the north".¹

XIV. 8.—"Consider such expressions as that tender and glorious verse in Isaiah, speaking of the cedars on the mountains as rejoicing over the fall of the king of Assyria: 'Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since *thou* art gone down to the grave no feller is come up against us'. See what

¹ Henry Dwight Sedgwick, "Italy in the Thirteenth Century," Vol. I, p. 293.

sympathy there is here, as if with the very hearts of the trees themselves."—RUSKIN.

XVIII. 2 and 7.—*A nation scattered and peeled.*

Dr. John Cairns visited as a student the ancient burying-place of the Jews in Prague.

"The monuments," he wrote, "date from the tenth century. No language can give an idea of its first impression. At one end, one sees innumerable masses of grey, weather-beaten stones, in every grotesque angle of incidence and co-incidence, but all rude and mean, covered with mystic Hebrew letters, and half buried amid long grass, nettles, and weeds. The place looks exactly as if originally a collection of dunghills, or perhaps of excavated earth, left to its natural course after the corpses had been thrown in and the rude billets set over them. The economy of the race is visible in their measure for the dead, and contrasts wonderfully with the roominess and delicate adornment of German churchyards in general. The hoar antiquity of the place is increased by a wilderness of alders, which grow up around the walls and amidst the stones, twisted, tangled, stunted, desolately old and yet renewing their youth, a true type of the scattered, bruised, and peeled, yet ineradicable Israel itself."

XIX. 25.—Dr. A. B. Davidson quotes these verses in his essay on "Biblical Theology". He points out that at its very birth the Jewish Church is conscious of a higher destiny than Judaism. "The idea of a universal fatherhood and brotherhood seizes it, and Egypt shares in its love and Assyria in its God, and the day comes when 'Israel shall be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, and the Lord of hosts shall bless them, saying: Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance'. With such music on her lips the Old Testament Church expires, entering into night, full of dreams of the distant but approaching morn."¹

XXI. 11, 12.—*He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, the morning cometh, and also the night.*

Archbishop Maclagan wrote to a friend in December, 1890: "How I wish you had been in church with us this afternoon!

¹ "Biblical and Literary Essays," pp. 5, 6.

We had that wonderful anthem of Mendelssohn's, 'The Sorrows of Death.' The tenor solo was sung by F——, and it could hardly have been sung better. The powerful pathetic phrase, 'Watchman! will the night soon pass?' repeated again and again, and at last with an indescribably passionate fervour, was most affecting. It was like the agonized cry of a soul passing through some awful night of sorrow or suffering, and crying out in agony, 'Would God it were morning!' It was too much for me, and I was obliged to turn my head away and look at the cross standing out against the darkness of the Lady Chapel till the anthem was over, and I could kneel down and hide my face."¹

XXII. 22.—*The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder.*

"I wait, my soul doth wait
For Him who on his shoulder bears the key;
I sit fast bound and yet not desolate,
My mighty Lord is free.

Be thou uplifted, Door
Of everlasting strength; the Lord on high
Hath gone, and captive led for evermore
My long captivity."

—DORA GREENWELL.

xxv. 8.—*He will swallow up death in victory.*

The Rev. John Maxwell Lyte, grandson of the author of the hymn "Abide with me," was one of Bishop G. H. Wilkinson's curates at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, and his domestic chaplain at Truro. He died of consumption in January, 1887. On 1 February, Bishop Wilkinson wrote to Archbishop Benson: "One thing will interest you. I never could understand why, year after year, he struggled to live. Night after night, year after year, pain and suffering; and yet he rose up and struggled into his things, and struggled through his work, and besought me not to let him give up anything. I saw how ready he was to go—so ready that when the doctor told him last week that it might be very near, it made no difference to him. He was ready any moment. So it puzzled me—this tenacity for living.

¹ F. D. How, "Life of Archbishop Maclagan," p. 223.

I find out now what it was. He regarded death as a thing which God hated, and which he was bound to fight against over and over again, until God saw fit to give to death an apparent victory. And he brought to bear upon it the Divine courage of which H. Perreyve speaks, the transformed 'pluck' of his early life (he won five silver cups one afternoon, and was the best high jumper of his College, etc.)—and he fought death point by point, even to the end, and in his last Communion on the morning of his departure his voice rose above Cornish's in the 'Gloria in Excelsis,' and then, having sung his song of victory, he gave himself up. He had fought and conquered, so far as God willed him to conquer, and then when God willed, he went to sleep."¹

XXVI. 3.—*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee.*

The favourite text of Frances Willard.

Thomas Carlyle's mother wrote to him in a letter of 1836:—

"Keep a good heart; may God give us all grace to stay our minds on Him who has said in His Word, He will keep them in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on Him, because they trust in Him.

'Wait on the Lord, and be thou strong, and He shall strength afford

Unto thy heart; yea, do thou wait, I say, upon the Lord.

What time my heart is overwhelmed, and in perplexity,
Do Thou me lead unto the Rock that higher is than I.'

"Let us not be careful what the world thinks of us, if we can say with a good conscience, with Toplady:—

'Careless, myself a dying man,
Of dying men's esteem;
Happy, O God, if Thou approve,
Though all beside condemn.'"²

XXVI. 19.—*Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust.*

In old Egyptian thought, as Prof. Breasted reminds us, the chief and dominant note throughout is insistent, even passionate

¹ "Memoir of G. H. Wilkinson," Vol. II, p. 58.

² "New Letters," Vol. I, pp. 44, 45.

protest against death. That may be said to be the record of humanity's earliest supreme revolt against the great darkness and silence from which none returns. "The word death never occurs in the Pyramid Texts except in the negative or applied to a foe. Over and over again we hear the indomitable assurance that the dead lives. . . . Not infrequently the utterance concludes with the assurance, 'Thou livest, thou livest, raise thee up'; or 'Thou diest not, stand up, raise thee up'; or 'Raise thee up, O this King Pepi, thou diest not,' or an appendix is added as a new utterance by itself, 'O lofty one among the Imperishable Stars, thou perishest not eternally'." ¹

XXVI. 20.—*Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment.*

J. M. Neale used this text for a sermon preached before a retreat. In it he said:—

"If the verse you just now heard were to have an Antiphon, the first word would give the keynote: 'Come'. He that gives the invitation, clearly promises to share the seclusion. He that, on that first Easter night, in all the power of the Body of His Resurrection, was with His disciples where the doors were shut for fear of the Jews—He here calls His people to shut the doors about them, to the end that they may shut Him in with them. Not as Noah in the ark; there, the Lord shut him in: but the Lord, Man as well as God, was not shut in with him. No; this 'Come' finds its response in those invitations in the Apocalypse: 'The SPIRIT and the Bride say, Come'." ²

The idea of religious retreats for the people is very beautifully set forth by René Bazin in his novel "Le Blé qui lève".

In the Life of Frances Willard, the American Methodist temperance leader, we read that the family were accustomed to attend summer camp meetings:—

"These were meetings held for ten days or two weeks in some secluded country spot amid grass and trees, where those who came lived in the utmost simplicity in tents, and were free from the business and cares of ordinary life. They met together

¹ "Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt," p. 91.

² "Sermons on Passages from the Prophets," Vol. I, p. 79.

to sing and pray, and to devote themselves to a search after the deeper things of God."

XXVI. 20, 21.—"I had the happiness," writes Patrick Walker, "to hear blest Mr. Cargill preach his last sermons, . . . in Dun-syre-Common, betwixt Clydesdale and Lothian, where he lectured upon the first chapter of Jer. and preached upon that soul-refreshing text, . . . 'Come, my people, enter into your chambers,' etc., wherein he was short, marrowy, and sententious, as his ordinary was in all his publick sermons and prayers, with the greatest evidences of concernedness, exceeding all that ever I heard open a mouth, or saw open a Bible to preach the gospel, with the greatest indignation at the unconcernedness of hearers. He preached from experience, and went to the experience of all that had any of the Lord's gracious dealing with their souls. It came from his heart and went to the heart; as I have heard some of our common hearers say, that he spake as never man spake, for his words went through them.

"He insisted what kind of chambers these were of protection and safety, and exhorted us all earnestly to dwell in the cliffs of the rock, to hide ourselves in the wounds of Christ, and to wrap ourselves in the believing application of the promises flowing therefrom; and to make our refuge under the shadow of his wings, until these sad calamities pass over, and the dove come back with the olive-leaf in her mouth. These were the last words of his last sermon."¹

XXVIII.—Cromwell wrote to the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland on 3 August, 1650 :—

"I pray you read the Twenty-eighth of Isaiah, from the fifth to the fifteenth verse. And do not scorn to know that it is the Spirit that quickens and giveth life."

XXVIII. 16.—*He that believeth shall not make haste.*

Prof. Robertson Smith painted this text in Hebrew in the corner of his portrait by Sir George Reid, which is reproduced as the frontispiece to the biography by Dr. Sutherland Black and Mr. George Chrystal. "The words," say the biographers, "were often on his lips, and they certainly expressed a lifelong attitude of mind. Nothing was more striking in Smith's

¹ "Six Saints of the Covenant," Vol. II, pp. 48, 49.

intellectual history than the slow progress he made towards emancipation as a theologian, the almost obstinate conservatism with which he clung to the forms of thought familiar to him in his youth. . . . He began with a profound conviction of the truth of the evangelical system as taught in Scotland in the first half of the nineteenth century. That conviction he never abandoned, though for many years before his death he had ceased to exercise the functions of the ministry."

xxx. 15.—*In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.*

Visitors to the Luther House at Wittenberg will remember the richly carved portal which bears the date 1540. It is made of sandstone from the Elbe district and has two stone seats over which are canopies. One of these stone canopies has a portrait of Luther, the other bears his arms. On the porch, round the arms, are the letters V.I.V.I.T. Dr. Kroker, in his admirable biography of Katharina von Bora, Luther's wife, reminds us that if we take away the points from this word we have the Latin *vivit*, i.e. He lives—alluding to the Resurrection of Christ. Separated by the periods the five letters form the mysterious saying of Luther. He explained that these were the first letters of five German words, which comprehend in themselves our faith in God. Their meaning will not be revealed until the Last Day. Luther never named the five words to his friends. On the other side of the porch, round the head of Luther, is a mention of his age (57), and in Latin that verse from the prophet Isaiah: "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength"—a favourite text of Luther's.

Luther remarked in his Table Talk:—

"If thou desirest to learn how thou shalt overcome the greatest, most dreadful, and most terrible enemies; who might otherwise easily devour a man and injure him in body and soul—enemies against whom a man might well buy all kinds of weapons and spend all his money in learning how to use them:—I tell thee there is a sweet and lovely herb called Patience. Yes, but how shall I obtain such a medicine? Answer: Hold fast the belief that no one can harm thee except by the will of God. If it happens, it happens through the kind and gracious will of God, so that the enemy will do himself a thousand times more

harm than he does to thee. From this thought there flows forth love, which says : ' I will return him good for evil, I will heap coals of fire on his head '. These are the weapons with which we conquer the enemies who seem like the great cliffs which will not fall, and cannot be won with iron or steel. Love teaches us to suffer." ¹

xxx. 21.—*Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee.*

Father Tyrrell says in his autobiography :—

"I do not accuse Augustine of superstition in that he regarded his *Tolle et lege*, as Anthony his *Si vis perfectus esse*, in the light of a *locutio divina*—a true speaking of God in answer to the question of his heart ; although I do not dare to say that in either case the coincidence was miraculous. God can work such results through the machinery of the natural order, without in any way altering its structure. But when the coincidence is sought and, as it were, forced by the casting of lots or the random opening of the Scriptures or of à Kempis, with a sort of impatience of God's reticence, it is hard not to scent superstition ; nor do I think that the election of Matthias the Apostle, or similar obviously exceptional and divinely ordered lotteries, can win authority for a promiscuous use of this method of guidance, however prayerfully and reverentially applied." ²

xxx. 32.—*And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the Lord shall lay upon him, it shall be with tabrets and harps : and in battles of shaking will he fight with it.*

The text of a sermon by J. M. Neale. By the grounded staff he understands the Cross of the Lord. "It is that staff," he says, "which turns the Amalekites to flight : which to us, as to Jonathan, gives the sweet honey in the waste howling wilderness : it is that staff on which the Lord passed through the Jordan of Death, that He might become two bands—of ransomed men, and preserved angels. And, 'grounded' : for this staff was set up on Mount Calvary in the day of darkness and gloominess : the day of clouds and thick darkness.

"So you see, once more we have the Cross : and most remark-

¹ E. Kroker, "Luthers Tischreden," No. 804.

² P. 121.

ably is it set forth. 'In every place where the grounded staff shall pass which the Lord shall lay upon Him.' 'As many words,' says St. Jerome, 'so many mysteries'. Where was the Cross laid upon Him, but in the Via Dolorosa, while His blessed feet trod all that weary way from the judicial gate to the summit of the hill? And yet it is spoken of as already grounded, as already set up in its place."¹

XXXII. 2.—*The shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*

Dean Boyle says of Mure of Caldwell, the eminent scholar and politician :—

"The last days of Mure's life were days of sadness. He was worn by pain and his powers of speech failed him. The expression of his eyes, like those of the dying Agricola, desired something, and that something was found in a large printed copy of the well-known hymn, 'Rock of Ages,' which had been displayed a few days before by one of his family. He passed peacefully away after he had read the familiar words."²

Dr. G. A. Smith reminds us that the Arabian nomad lies between the bare stones and the clear stars. "Thus any mythology which arose in Arabia was virtually exhausted in the identification of the gods with sun, moon, and stars above and with the rocks below, whether these were the great cliffs that cast a beneficent shadow or were meteoric stones fallen from heaven and worshipped as images of deity; and in the recognition of theophanies and Divine actions in the thunderstorm and rainbow—two favourite themes of Arab poets."³

Ruskin compares a happy home to this rock of Isaiah: "So far as it is a sacred place, a vestal temple, a temple of the hearth watched over by Household Gods, before whose faces none may come but those whom they can receive with love,—so far as it is this, and roof and fire are types only of a nobler shade and light,—shade as of the rock in a weary land, and light as of the Pharos in the stormy sea;—so far it vindicates the name, and fulfils the praise, of Home."

XXXII. 8.—*The liberal deviseth liberal things.*

The Trades Hall at Stirling has an inscribed tablet in honour

¹ "Sermons on Passages from the Prophets," Vol. I, p. 95.

² "Recollections of Dean Boyle of Salisbury," p. 36.

³ "The Early Poetry of Israel," p. 31.

of Robert Spittal, tailor to King James IV (c. 1530). It was built by the Incorporated Trades, who claim to be the special beneficiaries on Spittal's endowment, in 1751; and the tablet on the outside states that it was "Erected in honour of Robert Spittal, Taylor to King James the Fourth, Donor of the Hospital in this Burgh for relief of Decayed Tradesmen. The Liberal Man Deviseth Liberal Things:" and the shears are emblazoned. There is also an inscription on a tablet inside the building, which, after narrating his benefactions to the burgh, adds—"He likewise gave part of his wealth for building useful bridges in this neighbourhood. Forget not, reader, that the scissors of this man do more honour to human nature than the swords of conquerors."

xxxiii. 17.—*Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.*

Canon Liddon closed his last Bampton Lecture on "The Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" with a reference to this text:—

"May you, sustained by His presence and aid, so pass through the valley of the shadow of death as to fear no evil, and to find, at the gate of the eternal world, that all the yearnings of faith and hope are to be more than satisfied by the vision of the Divine 'King in His Beauty!'"

"For inner consolation," writes Sir E. T. Cook, "in hours of suffering and anxiety Ruskin turned, as his diary shows, to the Bible. He tried daily for some months to cast his horoscope and to be guided and strengthened, by 'Sortes Biblicae'. Thus on 15 May we read, 'Open at "Behold, we have left all and followed Thee,"' on 19 May, 'Open in evening at "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life,"' and on 14 August, "'Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, wherefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness,"' and again, on the same day, 'Opened at Isaiah xxxiii. 17: "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off"'. My old Bible often does open there, but it was a happy first reading."¹

¹ "The Life of Ruskin," Vol. II, p. 121.

XXXIII. 24.—*The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.*

When John Bright lost his young wife in September, 1841, he wrote to Richard Cobden: "It has pleased the Almighty to take from me my beloved and cherished companion. She sank peacefully to her rest about one o'clock this day. She had almost no suffering, and death to her had long lost his terrors. Until she became mine, I did not know that mortality ever was the abode of so much that was pure and lovely. Her sainted spirit I cannot doubt is now an inhabitant of that city 'where none can say he is sick,' and in this deep affliction my heart rejoices in the full assurance that to my precious wife the change is inconceivably glorious."¹

XXXV. 1.—*The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.*

Robert Browning wrote to Miss Barrett: "It seems to me, to myself, that no man was ever before to any woman what you are to me—the fulness must be in proportion, you know, to the vacancy . . . and only *I* know what was behind—the long wilderness *without* the blossoming rose . . . and the capacity for happiness, like a black gaping hole, before this silver flooding. Is it wonderful that I should stand as in a dream, and disbelieve—not *you*—but my own fate? Was ever anyone taken suddenly from a lampless dungeon, and placed upon the pinnacle of a mountain without the head turning round and the heart turning faint, as mine do? And you love me more, you say?—Shall I thank you or God? Both—indeed—and there is no possible return from me to either of you! I thank you as the unworthy may—and as we all thank God."²

XXXV. 6.—*Then shall the lame man leap as an hart.*

Mère Angélique of Port-Royal was one day conversing with the novices on the all importance of charity in the monastic life. "What does it matter," she said, "whether we be sitting or standing, halt or whole, so we be truly united, one with the other?" and then, turning suddenly to a lame sister, who sat by, "Come, come, daughter, be not over anxious. The lame walk as quickly in Paradise as the rest."

XXXV. 7.—*In the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.*

¹ G. M. Trevelyan, "Life of John Bright," p. 43.

² "Letters of Robert Browning and E. B. Barrett," 1845-6, p. 389.

"Grass, with reeds and rushes," grows near the margin of that sea which, in Dante's vision, washes the base of the mountain of Purgatory. Emerging from "the habitation of dragons," the poets, Dante and Virgil, meet the venerable Cato, the guardian of the mountain of purification. He orders that Virgil should wash from Dante's cheeks the mark of Hell, and gird him with a rush in token of humility.

"When we were (come to) where the dew contends with the sun, and through being in a place where there is shade is but little dissipated, my master gently laid both his outstretched hands upon the herbage; whereupon I, who perceived his design, extended towards him my cheeks bedewed with tears; and on them he brought thoroughly to light that colour which Hell had concealed on me."

xxxv. 7.—*Grass with reeds and rushes.*

Rudyard Kipling's poem, "The Reeds of Runnymede," reminds us of the great charter signed near the River Thames on 15 June, 1515:—

"And still when mob or monarch lays
Too rude a hand on English ways,
The whisper wakes, the shudder plays,
Across the reeds at Runnymede.
And Thames, that knows the moods of kings
And crowds and priests and such-like things,
Rolls deep and dreadful as he brings
Their warning down from Runnymede."¹

xxxviii. 16.—*O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.*

J. M. Neale, in his sermon, "The Land of the Living," preached from this text on the death of a sister of St. Margaret's, East Grinstead. The first sentence was, "And He said unto them, What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people." "By that Cross, which is the anchor of all our hopes; by that Agony, which is the ground of

¹ "History of England," by C. R. L. Fletcher and Rudyard Kipling, p. 67.

all our comfort ; by that pierced Side, which is the cavern from the tempest, the hiding-place from the storm ; by that Crown of Thorns, which has purchased for the elect a crown of glory ; by those outstretched Arms, which invite the whole world ; by that Head, bowed down to give the last kiss of affection to each loving Bride ; ‘ by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit ’ . . .

“ ‘ By these things men live.’ Again I say, What things ? And the answer is : By those very things we have before us now : by the coffin, the bier, the pall ; by the words which we shall so soon hear, ‘ Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ’ . . . ‘ By these things men live,’ in the only true life. By these things men enter the land of the living. For they are but the worn-out tent of the soldier, who, after many battles, many toils, many defeats, many victories, is at length admitted to a place in the palace of his Lord. These are the dungeon garments of the emancipated prisoner, who, after many a night of weeping and day of darkness, has entered that Jerusalem which is free. These are the types of those grave-clothes that were rolled together by the care of the Angels, of that napkin put safely and calmly away in a place by itself ; and therefore types also of that Prince of Life Who vouchsafed to use for three days what His dear servants will need, it is true, a little longer, but which, as surely as He laid aside at His own resurrection, so will they in that first Resurrection before they reign with Him a thousand years.”¹

XXXVIII. 19.—Bunyan quotes this Scripture in the preface to “ Grace Abounding ” : “ It is written . . . *The father to the children shall make known Thy truth.* Yea, it was for this reason I lay so long at Sinai (Lev. iv. 10, 11) to see the fire, and the cloud and the darkness, *that I might fear the Lord all the days of my life upon earth, and tell of His wondrous works to my children* (Ps. LXXVIII. 3-5).”

CHAPTER XL.

XL.—According to the Midrash on the Lamentations, all the ill that Jeremiah predicted was by Isaiah turned beforehand into

¹ “ Sermons on Passages from the Prophets,” Vol. I, p. 151.

good. It was especially with reference to chapters XL.-LXVI. that he was regarded as the prophet of comfort.¹

XL. 1.—*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people.*

Ian Maclaren said in looking back upon his brilliant and successful career: "If I had my life to live over again I would make my ministry a more comforting ministry".

XL. 4, 5.—*Every valley shall be exalted.*

"The filling up the valley is, generally speaking, a more difficult work than the cutting down of hills. I remember, some years ago, when they were making a great railway in the north, the line had to run across a large bog or swamp, called Chat Moss. Here they threw in hundreds of thousands of cart-loads of earth and rubbish, and still it seemed as if the marsh swallowed them up, and that it would be impossible ever to get a firm road across it. The difficulty was so great that, at one time, they actually intended to turn the line in another direction; but by persevering, week after week, and load after load, at last they filled up the bog, and I have myself crossed the Chat Moss embankment, and wondered at the skill and power that had been laid out upon it. Very well then, 'Every valley shall be exalted'."—J. M. NEALE.²

XL. 5.—*The glory of the Lord shall be revealed.*

Bishop G. H. Wilkinson told Archbishop Benson that on his first visit to Cornwall, he was carried away with the possibilities of the work of the Church; and that at his first Communion in the Cathedral, the text, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed," was borne in upon him with such a Divine force that he changed all the outline of what he meant to say into this theme, and gave up the plan of what he had prepared.³

XL. 11.—*He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom.*

Lady Grisell Baillie, the first Deaconess and head of the Women's Guild of the Church of Scotland, passed away after a short illness in December, 1891.

"She asked to have her letters opened, for 'Very likely there

¹ S. R. Driver, "Introduction to Delitzsch's Commentary on Isaiah," p. 26, note 2.

² "Sermons in Sackville College Chapel," Vol. II, p. 59.

³ "Memoir of G. H. Wilkinson," Vol. II, p. 13.

may be some one starving, or wanting their rent paid'. The first was a promise to join the Temperance Society, in reply to a circular she had sent; and she exclaimed joyfully, 'My first-fruits!' When some one reminded her, 'Jesus is near,' her reply was, 'I cannot say that He is near; He carries me in His arms—He carries me'—with an intense consciousness of her Saviour's support. On the very last night she repeated, during a temporary rally, the familiar words of the 23rd Psalm."¹

Prof. Breasted quotes from an ancient Egyptian document in which the ideal sovereign is described as the shepherd of all men. "When his herds are few, he passes the day to gather them together, their hearts being fevered." . . . "While there is no unquestionably predictive element in this passage, it is a picture of the ideal sovereign, the righteous ruler with 'no evil in his heart,' who goes about like a 'shepherd,' gathering his reduced and thirsty herds. Such a righteous reign, like that of David, has been and may be again."²

XL. 15.—*He taketh up the isles as a very little thing.*

"There is a beautiful old story of a saint who saw in a vision a shining figure approaching him, holding in his hand a dark and cloudy globe. He held it out, and the saint, looking attentively upon it, saw that it appeared to represent the earth in miniature; there were the continents and seas, with clouds sweeping over them; and, for all that it was so minute, he could see cities and plains, and little figures moving to and fro. The angel laid his finger on a part of the globe, and detached from it a small cluster of islands, drawing them out of the sea; and the saint saw that they were peopled by a folk, whom he knew, in some way that he could not wholly understand, to be dreary and uncomforted. He heard a voice saying, 'He taketh up the isles as a very small thing'; and it darted into his mind that his work lay with the people of those sad islands; that he was to go thither, and speak to them a message of hope."³

XL. 30, 31.—Mr. Feeble-mind, in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," said:—

"This I have resolved on, to wit, to run when I can, to go

¹ "Life of Dr. Charteris," p. 358.

² "Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt," p. 211.

³ A. C. Benson, "The Thread of Gold," pp. 88, 89.

when I cannot run, and to creep when I cannot go. As to the main, I thank Him that loved me, I am fixed; my way is before me, my mind is beyond the river that hath no bridge; though I am, as you see, but of a feeble mind."

XL. 31.—*They shall mount up with wings as eagles.*

St. Francis de Sales wrote :—

"Eagles have great courage and much strength for flight; but their sight is incomparably stronger than their wings; and their gaze darts forth more swiftly and penetrates farther than their pinions. Even so our spirits, possessed by nature of a holy inclination towards God, have much more clearness of understanding to realize how well He deserves our love than force of will to love Him."

On the last day of his life Bishop G. H. Wilkinson attended the quarterly meeting of the Executive Committee of the Representative Church Council at 13 Queen Street, Edinburgh, and made a speech on the Clergy Sustentation Fund. About noon he passed suddenly away. His daughter has described how he had spent the early morning of that last day: "He prepared himself for his meetings as usual with prayer and meditation, kneeling strong and erect, and with his revised version of Isaiah before him—the lesson for the day was the latter part of Isaiah XL, 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles'—looking up and seeking guidance. Then we drove to the meeting. He walked in with his rug on his arm, and the reporters told me afterwards that he had walked into the room looking strong and almost boyish, he was so bright, walking 'in full swing' into the room where the meeting was to be held. Some one who was present told me that while he was speaking his voice became stronger and stronger, and a far-away look came into his face, as if he was almost in God's presence."¹

XL. 31.—*They shall walk, and not faint.*

Cardinal Vaughan blamed himself in his diary for the vehement impetuosity of his nature: "I cannot walk but I must run—seldom do I walk slowly, seldom do I look where I put my feet, or pause to see what may be the obstacle in the way.

¹ "Memoir of Bishop G. H. Wilkinson," Vol. II, p. 428 f.

How many times a day am I within an inch of being driven over? How often in the streets do I put my hand up to a horse's head to let myself pass by before him? Everything savours of impatience, of hurry, of love of the object to be attained, and of recklessness as to the means. I am imprudent because I have not time and patience to consult other people's feelings and ways of thought. I am hasty and rash because I do not care for my own comfort." A few weeks later he wrote: "All this impetuosity must be stopped somehow or other. How I am to begin this training and breaking-in I am at a loss to decide; the Holy Ghost must strengthen me if I am to succeed at all. I haven't the strength within me."¹

XLI. 10.—*Fear thou not; for I am with thee, etc.*

When Frances Ridley Havergal was dying, she whispered many times: "Come, Lord Jesus, come and fetch me; oh run, run". (So Henri Perreyve repeated at the last these words: "Jésus, prenez moi bientôt".)

On Tuesday, 3 June, Whit Tuesday, at dawn the change came. One of her sisters repeated, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee".

"F. 'He *must* keep His word.'

"Isaiah xli. 10 was repeated *incorrectly*; she whispered it correctly for us. After a short doze, she exclaimed: 'I am lost in amazement! There hath not failed one word of all His good promise!'"

XLI. 19.—*I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, etc.*

Cromwell used this passage to enforce a plea for toleration which he addressed in July, 1653, to the Little Parliament. Dr. Stoughton writes:—

"As Cromwell, with his officers, entered, all present rose and bowed. The General moved his hat, advanced to the middle window, and leaning on the back of a chair, addressed them for more than an hour. Descanting upon religion, he pleaded earnestly that all God's saints should be treated with tenderness, and that if he had seemed to reflect on those who held Presbyterian opinions, he now thought faithfulness demanded that he should love them. He had, when God had been gracious to

¹ J. G. Snead-Cox, "Life of Cardinal Vaughan," Vol. I, p. 50.

him and his companions, often read that passage: 'He would plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; and he would set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine tree, and the box tree together'. Therefore he besought his audience to have care for the whole flock, lambs and all, and if the poorest and most mistaken Christian should desire to live peaceably and quietly under the Government, let him be protected."¹

XLII. 11.—*Let the inhabitants of the rock sing.*

Miss Mirehouse wrote of Canon Liddon's visits to her home in Pembrokeshire: "His special delight was to say his offices amongst the rocks. As he stood bareheaded in their depths, the caves would re-echo with the glorias as he shouted them out, and he would chant Psalm after Psalm of praise, as if nothing could sufficiently satisfy the exuberance of his thankful heart."²

XLII. 16.—*I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not.*

Baroness Bunsen wrote, after the death of her daughter Matilda, who had long suffered from ill-health, and who died as a deaconess to idiot children at Neudettelsau (Bavaria), under Pastor Löhe:—

"I would not call her back! much and continually as I miss her loving presence. I could not give her what she wanted in life, the satisfying of her craving for fulness of life and activity; now, all her longings are soothed.

'So führst du doch recht selig, Herr! die Deinen;
Ja selig! und doch meistens wunderbar!'

"Do you know that hymn—the favourite of Schelling?"³

XLIII. 2.—*When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.*

Canon Liddon wrote of the last hours of Bishop Hamilton of Salisbury (1869):—

"Found him in the drawing-room, on the south side, lying under Bishop Burgess's picture. He was much moved at seeing me, but could say nothing. Could not bear to be talked to. Is greatly changed since Wednesday week. In the evening I prayed

¹ "History of Religion in England," Vol. II, p. 57.

² "Life and Letters of Henry Parry Liddon," p. 70.

³ "Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen," Vol. II, p. 390.

with him, and on my saying that he would feel the truth of our Lord's promise, 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee,' he pressed my hand and nodded assent. In the morning he had told Mrs. Hamilton that he was quite ready to go."¹

Bunyan tells us that after his conflict of soul in passing the river, "Christian was in a muse awhile. To whom also Hopeful added these words, 'Be of good cheer, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole'. And with that Christian brake out with a loud voice, Oh, I see Him again! and he tells me, 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee'. Then they both took courage, and the enemy was after that as still as a stone, until they were gone over. Christian therefore presently found ground to stand upon, and so it followed that the rest of the river was but shallow: thus they got over."

THE CYPRESS.

XLIV. 14.—*He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak.*

Moncure D. Conway writes in "Fraser's Magazine" for 1870: "The cypress, of which, as we learn from the Bible, idols were carved, was sacred as an evergreen. . . . Mr. Tylor found among the American Indians an aged cypress held sacred and loaded with offerings."

XLIV. 22.—*I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.*

Bishop G. H. Wilkinson, in one of his last sermons at St. Peter's, Eaton Square (12 Nov. 1882), used these words:—

"Is there anyone here who has never yet known the happiness of realizing that the past is entirely done away with? Do you say, 'How can I attain this happiness?' God leads different souls in different ways. To me it came very quietly; long after I had been enabled to *understand* the Bible in this respect. Long after I had taught other people and brought them into happiness, I myself had no inward rest. I sat quietly in my room, at every spare moment, with my Bible, and I asked

¹ "Life and Letters of Henry Parry Liddon," p. 117.

God by the Holy Spirit to show me what I have tried to show you this morning—to expound the Bible to me. And, in His great Son, as calmly and quietly as a little child sits when the mother stoops to kiss it, quietly Rest came into my soul, and I realized the power of that which I had understood from my childhood.”

Bunyan says in “Grace Abounding”: “Now I should find my mind to flee from God, as from the face of a dreadful Judge, yet this was my torment, I could not escape from His hand: (*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, Heb. x.). But, blessed be His grace, that Scripture, in these flying fits, would call, as running after me, *I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins; return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee* (Is. XLIV. 22). This, I say, would come in upon my mind, when I was fleeing from the face of God; for I did flee from His face; that is, my mind and spirit fled before Him; by reason of His highness, I could not endure; then would the text cry, *Return unto Me*; it would cry aloud with a very great voice, *Return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee*.”

XLV. 5.—“In these days,” writes Bunyan in “Grace Abounding,” “I would find my heart to shut itself up against the Lord and against His holy word; I have found my unbelief to set, as it were, the shoulder to the door, to keep them out; and that too even then, when I have with many a bitter sigh cried, Good Lord, break it open; *Lord, break these gates of brass, and cut these bars of iron asunder* (Ps. CVII. 16). Yet that word would sometimes create in my heart a peaceable pause, *I girded thee, though thou hast not known me* (Is. XLV. 5).”

XLV. 7.—*I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.*

There is a well-known reference to this verse in “The Revolution in Tanner’s Lane”. Zachariah repeats the words to Jean Caillaud and his daughter Pauline.

“‘Whence is that?’ said Jean.

“‘From the Bible; give me one and I will show it to you.’ There was no English Bible in the house. It was a book not much used; but Pauline presently produced a French version, and Jean read the passage: ‘*Qui forme la lumière, et qui crée*

les ténèbres ; qui fait la paix, et qui crée l'adversité ; c'est moi, l'Éternel, qui fais toutes ces choses-là.'

"Pauline bent over her father and read it again : ' Qui crée l'adversité,' she said. ' Do you believe that ? '

" ' If it is there I do,' said Zachariah.

" ' Well, I don't.'

" ' What's adversity to hell-fire ? If He made hell-fire, why not adversity ? Besides, if He did not, who did ? ' "

XLV. 9.—*Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker ! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth.*

Writing on the ostraca, or ancient potsherds on which something has been written, Dr. Deissmann asks why they were so neglected in the past :—

" I am reminded of a sentence in one of Pastor von Bodelschwingh's annual reports of a scrap-collecting organization for the support of the Bethel charities near Bielefeld. ' Nothing is absolutely worthless,' he says, ' except bits of broken earthenware, and the fag-ends of cigars,' and the opinion seems to have been shared by the peasants of Egypt, at least so far as bits of pottery were concerned. They rummaged among ancient ruins and whenever they came across such pitiable objects as bits of earthenware vessels, they threw them away at once. . . . After all, what can there be more pitiful than an earthen potsherd ? The prophet in his emphatic irony could think of no image more apt to describe man's nothingness than that of a potsherd among potsherds."¹

XLV. 15.—*Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.*

From this text, on Sunday, 8 January, 1871, Dean Alford preached his last sermon. He died, after a brief illness, on the 12th at the age of sixty-one.

Madame Duclaux has these comments on the text :—

" ' Vere tu es Deus absconditus ! ' Mysterious text that accords in harmony the two divergent Mystics ; Pascal and Fénelon each adore the hidden god, ' Toute religion qui ne dit pas que Dieu est caché n'est pas véritable ' (' Pensée ' 585). But, to Pascal, this hidden, this uncertain Deity is no mere Sun and Soul of the Universe. Pascal is the least pantheistic of thinkers. Though

¹ " Light from the Ancient East," pp. 42, 43.

none, like this mathematician, has described the attraction of the Infinite and the mysterious abyss of the planet-sprinkled sky, yet he never lets those vague depths absorb his worship; and he might say, like Job: 'I have seen the moon advance in her majesty and have not bowed the knee!'"¹

XLV. 22.—*Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.*

Bible scholars outside England have noted that this was the text to which Charles Haddon Spurgeon owed his conversion. In "Foi et Vie" for 16 January, 1912, M. Henri Bois told the story afresh in an article entitled, "Le Rôle des Textes scripturaires dans la Conversion et la Vie chrétienne".

XLVII. 13.—*Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee.*

Defoe writes in his "Journal of the Plague Year" that At the beginning of the visitation astrologers did a roaring trade among the ignorant multitude. "The people," he says, "from what principle I cannot imagine, were more addicted to prophecies, and astrological conjurations, dreams, and old wives' tales, than ever they were before or since."

But when the plague reached its height in August and September (1665) "all the preachers, astrologers, fortune-tellers, and what they called cunning men, conjurors and the like; calculators of nativities and dreamers of dreams and such people were gone and vanished, not one of them was to be found." "I am verily persuaded," he continues, "that a great number of them fell in the heat of the calamity, having ventured to stay upon the prospect of getting great estates, and indeed the gain was but too great for a time, through the madness and folly of the people, but now they were silent, many of them went to their long home, not able to foretell their own fate, nor to calculate their own nativities. Some have been critical enough to say that every one of them died; I dare not affirm that; but this I must own, that I never heard of one of them that ever appeared after the calamity was over."

¹ "The French Ideal," p. 74.

XLIX. 15.—*Can a woman forget her sucking child.*

St. Bernard said in his memorial sermon on his beloved brother Gerard :—

“I fancy I hear my brother saying to me, ‘Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.’ Truly it were lamentable if he did. Thou knowest, Gerard, where I am, where I lie, where thou leftest me. No one is by, to stretch forth a hand to me. I look, as I have been wont to do in every emergency, to Gerard, and he is not there. Then do I groan, as one that hath no help.”

Near the close of his impassioned discourse he declared his submission to the decree of God. “Doth praise belong only to goodness? There is praise also for justice. ‘Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgments.’ Thou gavest Gerard; Thou hast taken him away. And if we mourn for his being taken, we forget not that he was given; and we render thanks that we deserved to have him, and wish not to lament him more than is expedient.

“I call to mind, O Lord, the covenant I made with Thee and the mercy Thou hadst on me, that Thou mayest be justified in Thy saying, and be clear when Thou art judged. When last year we were at Viterbo, on the business of the Church, Gerard fell sick; and as his illness increased and his calling seemed at hand, I grieved to lose the companion of my wanderings, to leave him in a strange land, and not to restore him to those who had entrusted him to my care—for he was loved by all, and deserved to be loved. Then, turning myself to prayer with tears and groans, ‘Wait,’ I said, ‘O Lord, until we return. After he has been restored to his friends, Thou shalt take him if Thou wilt, and I will not complain.’ Thou heardest my prayer, O God. He grew strong again. We finished the work Thou gavest us to do; we returned with joy and gladness, bearing with us the sheaves of peace. And then I nearly forgot my agreement, but Thou didst not. I am ashamed of these sobs, which accuse me of prevarication. What more can I say. Thou hast sought again what was entrusted to us: Thou hast received Thine own. These tears put an end to my words.

Do Thou, O Lord, vouchsafe an end and a measure to my tears." ¹

Robert Burns had this verse in mind when he closed his Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn, with these words:—

“The bridegroom may forget the bride
Was made his wedded wife yestreen;
The monarch may forget the crown
That on his head an hour has been;
The mother may forget the child
That smiles sae sweetly on her knee;
But I’ll remember thee, Glencairn,
And a’ that thou hast done for me!”

L. 2.—*Is My hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem?* (with LIX. 1.—*Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save*; and cf. Numbers XI. 23.—*And the Lord said unto Moses, Is the Lord’s hand waxed short?*)

Sydney Dobell wrote to the Rev. George Gilfillan in 1852: “I cannot understand a shortening of the ‘Arm of the Lord’. I shall not believe that ‘the Faith once *delivered* to the Saints’ has grown old and dead, till I see a Faith to replace it *delivered* also and by *the same Hand*. I would not have given up Moses till Christ, and by God’s help, I will abide by Christ, till Christ Himself shall release me. Till the veil of the Temple is rent, I will worship there.” ²

L. 4.—*The tongue of the learned.*

James Gilmour of Mongolia wrote to a friend in England who was being educated for the Christian ministry:—

“I’ll give you a text which I think peculiarly suitable for you, now a graduate, Isaiah L. 4, ‘The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary’. I like to dwell on this text. Learning should not make deep sermons, hard to be understood; on the contrary, it should be all employed to make the road simple and clear. Forgive me for exhorting you so,

¹ J. Cotter Morison, “Life and Times of St. Bernard,” pp. 232, 240.

² “Life and Letters of Sydney Dobell,” Vol. I, p. 246.

but I can't refrain from it when I think of the many learned men I know at home and here who employ their learning in giving learned sermons, *not* in making the way simple and plain." ¹

L. 10.—Archbishop Tait, in his "Recollections" of his wife, made the following reference to his illness in 1848: "On Ash-Wednesday I was expected to die every half-hour. There were long days and nights of watching during that Spring of 1848, when kingdoms all over Europe went down with a crash, and England itself was by many supposed to be on the brink of a revolution. Of all these outward events I knew nothing for many days. But my young wife kept watch beside my bed. All through the worst days, and still more when I was recovering, she was ready to pray with me and to repeat helpful texts and hymns; and her own spirit, as she often said afterwards, was stayed upon the text, Isaiah L. 10: 'Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.' " ²

LL.—Mr. Canton says, in his "History of the Bible Society" (Vol. III, pp. 374, 375):—

"In the thick of the Mutiny, when death was expected every hour, a leaf torn from the Word of Life carried assurance of protection to two English ladies and some little children, kept close prisoners at Sitapur. One of the children fell seriously ill, and the guards allowed a native doctor to send in some medicine. It was wrapped in a piece of printed paper, a fragment from the 51st chapter of Isaiah:—

" 'I, even I, am He that comforteth you; who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; And forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?

" 'The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he shall not die in the pit, nor that—'

¹ "Life of James Gilmour," p. 124.

² "Catherine and Craufurd Tait," pp. 25, 26.

"From the moment they read those words a great trust 'in the everlasting arms' drove out all fear of danger until they were rescued."

LI. 2.—*Look unto Abraham your father, . . . for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.*

With this text William Carey used to comfort himself in his early loneliness, and from it the Rev. Christopher Anderson preached Carey's memorial sermon in Charlotte Chapel, Edinburgh.¹

LI. 8.—*The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool.*

Patrick Walker says:—

"Tho' the Lord has been pleased in his sovereignty to restrain these lion-judgments, of sword, famine, and pestilence (the fore-sight and fore-thoughts whereof made our worthies to tremble) to roar and yell upon us, to awake us out of the deep sleep that the foolish are fallen into and slumbering of the wise; yet all may see the moth-judgments, both spiritual and temporal, consuming us secretly and insensibly, the nation wasting and the Church sinking, blasting us in all our projects and endeavours, both by sea and land; the most part either at a stand or going back."²

LII. 7.—*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, f. (with Rom. x. 15).*

At the church of St. Mary Abbots, Kensington, there is a tablet with the inscription:—

"To the ever dear memory of Irene Eleonora Verita Petrie of the Church Missionary Society, youngest daughter of Colonel Martin Petrie, who gave herself to the evangelization of Kashmir, April, 1894, and rested from her labours in the morning of her life at Leh in Tibet, on 6 August, 1897. 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace.'"

In his Paraphrase to St. John's Gospel Nonnus speaks of our Lord's "God-breathing sandals".³

¹ Dr. Smith's "Life of Carey," p. 436.

² "Six Saints of the Covenant," Vol. I, p. 11, and see also p. 25.

³ Quoted by Prof. David Smith in the "British Weekly," 23 January, 1913.

THE SERVANT OF THE LORD.

LII. 13-LIII.—“Those passages of Isaiah,” says Canon Kennett, “which speak of the ‘Servant of the Lord’ of which the greatest and most familiar is Isaiah LII. 13—LIII., are generally regarded as the climax of Old Testament prophecy. The passage just mentioned has so many points of contact with what Christians believe concerning the Christ who suffered for our sins and rose again for our justification, that it could not fail to attract the attention of Christians.”¹ Prof. Kennett recalls the words of Delitzsch that this passage looks as if it might have been written beneath the cross upon Golgotha, and was illuminated by the heavenly brightness that streams from Psalm cx. 1, ‘Sit thou on My right hand’.”

LIII.—In Michael Angelo’s picture of the Holy Family (No. 809 in the National Gallery), the Virgin Mother is seen withholding from the child Saviour the prophetic writings in which His sufferings are foretold. Rossetti wrote a sonnet on this picture, beginning with the words :—

“Turn not the prophet’s page, O Son ! He knew
 All that Thou hast to suffer, and hath writ,
 Not yet thine hour of knowledge. Infinite
 The sorrows that Thy manhood’s lot must rue
 And dire acquaintance of Thy grief. That clue
 The spirits of Thy mournful ministerings
 Seek through yon scroll in silence. For these things
 The angels have desired to look into.”

To his mother Rossetti wrote : “In the picture the Virgin is withdrawing from the child the book which contains the prophecy of his sufferings—I suppose that of Isaiah. The idea is a most beautiful one, and behind the group are angels perusing a scroll.”

Henry Martyn wrote in his Journal on 29 January, 1804 : “Read Isaiah LIV. after breakfast with some consideration and profit. On coming home, I retired to my room, and had a most affecting reading of Isaiah LIII. The arm of the Lord seemed to be revealed to me. What manner of love was it that the Lord should be *pleased* to bruise him. I found it in my heart to

¹ “The Servant of the Lord,” p. 1.

grieve at the sufferings of Christ and the sins that occasioned them, and not to seek for any of this world's enjoyments, when Christ was such a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

Bishop Patteson used to say as a child that his first sermon should be on Isaiah LIII. In his last letter he called it "idle and selfish" in himself to be engrossed in reading Isaiah in Hebrew with Delitzsch's comments.¹

From Isaiah LIII., on Good Friday, 1560, Melanchthon delivered his last public address. He had already suffered several attacks of the tertian fever which proved fatal to him a week afterwards, but he could not be persuaded to interrupt his labours. With self-sacrificing love, amidst weakness and suffering, he insisted on carrying on his daily duties. His friends and relatives attempted in vain to keep him out of his classroom. On the Thursday his strength had been visibly declining, and after supper he had a return of fever. He scarcely slept at all, but rose at four a.m., and at six o'clock gave his Good Friday lecture. In that beautiful and intimate diary of his last days which was prepared by his colleagues of the University of Wittenberg, under the probable guidance of his excellent son-in-law, Dr. Peucer, we read that Melanchthon even in his old age (for at sixty-three he was considered far advanced in years) had lectured at these early hours in Holy Week to the injury of his health.

LIII. 3.—*A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him.*

"At the door of the shop," says the Talmudic proverb, "are many friends and comrades; at the gate of grief are neither friends nor comrades."²

LIII. 4.—*Surely He hath borne our griefs.*

"O brothers, let us leave the shame and sin

Of taking vainly, in a plaintive mood,

The holy name of Grief!—holy herein,

That by the grief of One came all our good."

—MRS. BROWNING.

LIII. 6.—*The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*

¹ Miss Yonge's "Life of Bishop Patteson," Vol. I, p. 9.

² Quoted by Israel Abrahams in "Aspects of Judaism," p. 8.

Dr. John Cairns wrote, in his address on the Vicarious Sacrifice of Christ :—

“I dread much more the stifling influence of worldliness and religious torpor than the blasts of earnest debate ; and I would therefore have the Churches here represented while watching over orthodoxy by every right means, and discountenancing all visible error, still to hold on their path, in the confidence that their best work is to preach Christ crucified, whether amidst calm or amidst the sounds of controversy, assured that this alone makes way, healing the wounded conscience and cleansing the saint from all remaining sin ; and that the victory is to that Church, in the old world and the new, in the homes of our ripest Christianity and in the darkest outfields of our missions, which shall most earnestly, unswervingly, devoutly renew that ancient confession : ‘The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all,’ and shall turn it most gratefully and jubilantly into song, the song alike of earth and heaven : ‘Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen’.”

This address was delivered in America, and Prof. McEwen, in his biography of Principal Cairns, quotes the testimony of a hearer to this effect : “As the address moved from point to point, it arrested the attention and fascinated the minds of all hearers, and before the close he had raised the entire audience to a lofty pitch of enthusiasm. When he ceased, silence for a few moments rested upon all, which was broken by a universal burst of applause.”

LIV. 2, 3.—*Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations : spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.*

Mr. Ryland, who baptized William Carey, gave the following account of the pioneer missionary’s great sermon at Nottingham from this text on 31 May, 1792 :—

“If all the people had lifted up their voices and wept, as the children of Israel did at Bochim, I should not have wondered at the effect. It would only have seemed proportionate to the cause, so clearly did he prove the criminality of our supineness in the cause of God.”

The text was Isaiah’s vision of the widowed Church’s tent

stretching forth till her children inherited the nations and peopled the desolate cities, and the application to the reluctant brethren was couched in the two great maxims: "Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God." When the service was over and even Fuller and Ryland made no sign, the preacher, seizing Fuller's arm with an imploring look, exclaimed, "And are you, after all, going again to do nothing!" As a result of Carey's sermon, this gathering of village preachers entered on its minutes the resolution, "that a plan be prepared against the next ministers' meeting at Kettering for forming a Baptist Society for propagating the gospel among the heathen".¹

LIV. 10.—Thomas Erskine of Linlathen wrote on 7 January, 1864, to Dr. John Brown, who was mourning the loss of his wife:—

"I am sure you are nothing but grateful to God for her release. *He* had His own wise and loving purpose in detaining her here so long, in that state of mind which He had permitted and appointed, and she and you will doubtless one day know and rejoice in the accomplished effect of that purpose; but we can without hesitation acknowledge the mercy of her deliverance. What a blessed and glorious thing human existence would be, if we fully realized that the infinitely wise and infinitely powerful God loves each one of us with an intensity infinitely beyond what the most fervid human spirit ever felt towards another, and with a concentration as if He had none else to think of! It is to His hands that you have to trust her, and it is in His hands that she now is, always has been, and always will be. And this love has brought us into being, just that we might be taught to enter into *full sympathy* with Him, receiving His—giving our own—thus entering into the joy of our Lord. This is the hope—the sure and certain hope—set before us—sure and certain—for 'the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee'."

CHAPTER LV.

LV. 1.—*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.*

¹ Dr. George Smith's "Life of Carey," p. 51.

Mrs. Lawson, in describing the death of her father, Dr. J. M. Neale, at the age of forty-eight, says :—

“ During the last few days those of us who were gathered round his death-bed (how few of us are left now !) remember the one word repeated again and again by him as he sank into unconsciousness—Come—Come. One of his children, who has long ago joined her father, repeated from time to time a verse, a comforting ‘ Come,’ so as perhaps to suggest the thought he was trying to express : ‘ Ho, every one that thirsteth, Come ye to the waters . . . yea, Come ’ ; ‘ Come unto Me, all ye that labour, . . . and I will give you rest ’. And as the Come—Come—was still repeated with strange persistency and energy, we thought of many of his own sermons ; ‘ And it was now dark, and Jesus was not yet Come ’—‘ Lord, if it be Thou, bid me to Come ’—‘ He said Come ’. And of the ‘ Comes ’ in the Revelation—and then we felt and knew that it was with the Spirit and the Bride and the Apostle that he was saying—Come : *and about the fourth watch of the night He cometh.*

“ Even so, Come, Lord Jesus.”¹

From Isaiah LV. 1, F. W. Robertson preached his first sermon as a young curate at Winchester.

LV. 3.—*The sure mercies of David.*

“ Some one has said, ‘ Great is his happiness and safety who has beaten all his enemies, but far greater his to whom they have become friends and allies ’. Happy he who has conquered his passions, but far happier he whose servants and friends they have become. The reconciled passions are the ‘ *sure mercies of David* ’.”²

THE MYRTLE TREE.

LV. 13.—*Instead of the brier shall come forth the myrtle tree.*

Moncure D. Conway, writing in “ Fraser’s Magazine ” for 1870, remarks that the myrtle has a sanctity older than any Christian saint : “ In the far East it is still sacred. The Jews gather it for their feast of Tabernacles. The Arabs say that when Adam was driven out of Paradise he took with him three

¹ “ Letters of John Mason Neale,” p. 368.

² Coventry Patmore, “ The Rod, the Root, and the Flower,” p. 166.

things—the myrtle, which is the chief of sweet-scented flowers in the world ; an ear of wheat, which is the chief of all kinds of food ; and dates, which are the chief of the fruits.”

LVII. 12.—*To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.*

Bunyan, in “The Holy War,” writes thus of the glorious night on which the Recorder proclaimed Immanuel’s message, “Pardon, pardon, pardon for Mansoul !”

“No man of Mansoul could sleep that night for joy ; in every house there was joy and music, singing and making merry : telling and hearing of Mansoul’s happiness was then all that Mansoul had to do ; and this was the burden of all their song—‘Oh ! more of this at the rising of the sun ! more of this to-morrow !’”

LVII. 1.—On Saturday, 23 August, 1662, Edward Calamy preached a sermon at St. Austin’s Church in London, for Father Ash, from the words, “The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart ; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come” —words befitting the interment of a Puritan’s patriarch on Bartholomew’s eve. “Discoursing on his text,” says Dr. Stoughton, “the preacher reminded his audience how Methuselah died a year before the Flood ; Austin died a little before Hippo was taken ; and Luther died just as the wars in Germany were about to begin. He might have added that Blaise Pascal, who died the preceding Tuesday, 19 August, had been removed just as the agony of the crisis came in the history of the Port-Royalists.”¹

LVII. 10.—*The life of thine hand (R.V. a quickening of thy strength).*

The late Dr. Adolf Hausrath, in his “Life of Richard Rothe,” gives a glowing account of the visit of Jean Paul Richter to Heidelberg in Rothe’s student days. The great writer had been honoured by the magistracy with a barge of honour to convey him for a voyage on the Neckar to Hirschhorn (12 July, 1817). Princes, professors, and fair ladies took part in the outing. In the evening the students mustered for a torch-light

¹ “History of Religion in England,” Vol. III, p. 273.

procession. "Jean Paul," says Rothe, "came down to us. 'Where are hands?' was the first word he spoke. 'Children, hold out your hands, that I may clasp them; every hand is a heart.' And the hands so heaped themselves together, that he often pressed six or more at once." It was of this evening that Jean Paul wrote: "In the dark night which followed this fine day, I stood, happy and almost over-burdened with the gifts of the Eternal, in the midst of the students, with their cries of 'Vivat'. I gave my hand to hundreds of hands and looked thankfully heavenwards."¹

LVII. 15.—*The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity.*

Dr. Pusey liked to translate the Hebrew word for eternity, "For ever, and yet!"

LVIII. 14.—*I will . . . feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father.*

The visitor whose name was Secret said to Christiana: "The Merciful One has sent me to tell thee, that He is a God ready to forgive, and that He taketh delight to multiply the pardon of offences. He also would have thee to know that He inviteth thee to come into His presence, to His table; and that He will feed thee with the fat of His house, and with the heritage of Jacob thy father. There is Christian, thy husband that was, with legions more, his companions, ever beholding that face which doth minister life to the beholders; and they will all be glad when they shall hear the sound of thy feet step over thy Father's threshold."—BUNYAN.

CHAPTER LX.

LX. 1.—*Arise, shine; for thy light is come.* [Vulgate: *Surge, illuminare, Jerusalem.*]

In the Life of Henry Suso we find the following passage:—

"One day . . . whilst the Servitor was still at rest, he heard within himself a gracious melody by which his heart was greatly moved. And at the moment of the rising of the morning star, a deep sweet voice sang within him these words, 'Stella Maria maris, hodie processit ad ortum'. That is to say, 'Mary, Star of the Sea, is risen to-day'. And this song which he heard was so spiritual and so sweet, that his soul was transported by it and he

¹ "Richard Rothe und seine Freunde," Vol. I, p. 69.

too began to sing joyously. . . . And one day—it was in Carnival time—the Servitor had continued his prayers until the moment when the bugle of the watch announced the dawn. Therefore, he said to himself, Rest for an instant, before you salute the shining morning Star. And whilst that his senses were at rest, behold ! Angelic spirits began to sing the fair Respond ! ‘ Illuminare, illuminare, Jerusalem ! ’ And this song was echoed with a marvellous sweetness in the deeps of his soul. And when the angels had sung for some time his soul overflowed with joy.”

LX. 5.—*Thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged ; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee.*

This verse was prefixed by Miss Charlotte M. Yonge to her life of the missionary and martyr, Bishop Patteson of Melanesia.

LX. 8.—“ Those beautiful questioning words of Isaiah about the Gentiles often occur to me : ‘ Who are these who fly as doves to their windows ? ’ A flock of doves speeding to their home, their ark of refuge. Noah’s one dove, like the solitary Jewish Church, took refuge there from the wild waste of waters ; but all kindreds, peoples, tongues, and nations shall fly to their stronghold in the latter times, their feathers of gold and their wings covered with silver, white and lovely, though they have lien among the pots.”—JOSEPHINE BUTLER.¹

LX. 8.—*As the doves to their windows.*

“ The doves,” says J. M. Neale, “ can fly in only one direction ; and that direction is, to the windows. Now what are these windows ? Why, they are those of which it is said, ‘ Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun ’. And the chief of them was that window by means of which we may, as it were, look into His exceeding Love, who has allowed His Side to be pierced with the spear. . . . If it had been said : ‘ Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to *His* windows ? ’ I should not have been astonished ; but when I find the sufferings of the Bridegroom acknowledged to be the inheritance of the Bride, what love can we imagine greater than this ?

“ There are five windows, and five chiefly, so far as I ever have

¹ In a note to Dora Greenwell’s “ The Patience of Hope ”.

heard : those four wounds in the Hands and Feet, and that one in the Side." ¹

LX. 17.—*For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron.*

Charles Lamb speaks of "that moral alchemy which turns everything to gold, and converts disappointment itself into a ground of resignation and content."

Father Eustace, in Scott's "Monastery," says to Mary Avenel's disappointed lover, Edward Glendinning :—

"Go, get our horses ready, and as we descend the glen together, I will teach thee the truths through which the fathers and wise men of old had that precious alchemy, which can convert suffering into happiness."

LX. 18.—*Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.*

"Now I saw in my dream that the highway up which Christian was to go, was fenced on either side with a wall, and that wall was called Salvation."—BUNYAN.

LX. 19.—*The sun shall be no more thy light by day ; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee ; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.*

From this text Bishop Phillips Brooks preached his second sermon at Westminster Abbey (8 July, 1877). The subject was "The Symbol and the Reality". Canon Farrar wrote to the eloquent preacher : "It was a very great pleasure to me to resign the Abbey pulpit to you, and very nobly you used the opportunity". Dean Stanley was one of the hearers.

LXII. 1.—William Carey's sister wrote : "He was always, from his first being thoughtful, remarkably impressed about heathen lands and the slave-trade. I never remember his engaging in prayer, in his family or in public, without praying for those poor creatures. The first time I ever recollect any feeling for the heathen world, was from a discourse I heard my brother preach at Moulton, the first summer after I was thoughtful. It was from these words : 'For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake will I give him no rest'. It was a day to be remembered by me ; a day set

¹ "Sermons on Passages from the Prophets," Vol. I, p. 245 f.

apart for prayer and fasting by the Church. What God hath wrought since that time.”¹

LXII. 4.—*Thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah.*

“After this,” says Bunyan, “I beheld until they were come into the Land of Beulah, where the sun shineth night and day. Here, because they were weary, they betook themselves awhile to rest; and because this country was common for pilgrims, and because these orchards and vineyards that were here belonged to the King of the Celestial country, therefore they were licensed to make bold with any of his things. But a little while soon refreshed them here, for the bells did so ring, and the trumpets continually sounded so melodiously, that they could not sleep; and yet they received as much refreshing, as if they slept their sleep never so soundly. Here also all the noise of them that walked in the streets was, More pilgrims are come to town. And another would answer, And so many went over the water, and were let in at the golden gates to-day. They would cry again, There is now a legion of shining ones just come to town: by which we know that there are more pilgrims upon the road; for here they come to wait for them, and comfort them after their sorrow. Then the pilgrims got up, and walked to and fro; but how were their eyes now filled with celestial visions!”

LXII. 6.—*I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem.*

Patrick Walker tells us that Mr. Cargill preached, two miles beneath Lanark, in the Under-bankwood upon Clyde-side, upon that text, “I have set watchmen upon thy walls”; where he lamented that it had been the great sin of the Church of Scotland in setting up of watchmen that had little or no experience of regeneration, and had been overly of their trials, contenting themselves with a clatter of gifts and learning; and lamented also that so many watchmen were fled off the walls, and deserted their posts, frightened as if they were blasted or thunder-slain. He stayed for some time in that wood.”²

LXIII. 9.—*The angel of His presence saved them.*

Mrs. Josephine Butler was painted in her last years by G. F. Watts. When she saw the portrait for the first time she said

¹ Dr. George Smith’s “Life of Carey,” p. 31.

² “Six Saints of the Covenant,” Vol. II, p. 27.

but a few words. Later in the day she wrote the thoughts which the painting had awakened :—

“When I looked at that portrait which you have just done, I felt inclined to burst into tears. I will tell you why. I felt so sorry for her. Your power has brought up out of the depths of the past the record of a conflict which no one but God knows of. It is written in the eyes and whole face. Your picture has brought back to me all that I suffered, and the sorrows through which the Angel of God’s presence brought me out alive.”

LXIV. 1.—It is recorded that when Edward Irving was riding in the country on a cloudless day with his friend McLeod Campbell, there was a pause in the conversation, and Irving, looking upwards, said with deep emotion, “O that thou wouldest rend the heavens and come down !”¹

LXIV. 5.—*Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember Thee in thy ways.*

J. H. Newman wrote of his spiritual experiences during his dangerous illness in Sicily in 1833 :—

“I had a strange feeling on my mind that God meets those who go on in *His way*, who remember Him in His way, in the paths of the Lord ; that I must put myself in His path, His way, that I must do my part, and that He met those who rejoice and worked righteousness, and remembered Him and His ways—some texts of this kind kept haunting me, and I determined to set out by daybreak.”²

LXIV. 6.—*We all do fade as a leaf.*

Newman wrote to a friend in 1864 :—

“We seem to live and die as the leaves ; but there is One who notes the fragrance of every one of them, and when their hour comes, places them between the pages of His great book.”³

Towards the close of his life, in 1882, Newman wrote again :—

“How the old generation is fading away, out of sight ! What a mystery is life, and how it comes home to such as me to think of old Nestor’s melancholy lines, ‘As the outburst and fall of

¹ “Memorials of John McLeod Campbell,” Vol. I, p. 104.

² Wilfrid Ward, “Life of Cardinal Newman,” Vol. I, p. 55.

³ *Ibid.* p. 613.

leaves, such the generations of man'. How inwardly miserable must the life of man be without the gospel, and now men are doing their utmost to destroy our sole solace." ¹

LXVI. 10.—The "Guardian" for 23 September, 1910, in an obituary notice of the late Mrs. Ellen Olivia Peile, says :—

"When she wished to give consolation to mourners, she pointed to Isaiah LXVI. 10. So in respectful affection we may echo these sacred words: 'Rejoice for joy with her all ye who mourn for her'."

¹ Wilfrid Ward, "Life of Cardinal Newman, Vol. II, p. 519.

THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH.

"THE prophetic and the priestly offices were perfectly united in this son of the priest Hilkiyah of Anathoth."—E. KÖNIG.¹

"In the very moment of his call Jeremiah learned that he was a child of destiny."—ARTHUR PEAKE.²

THE culminating passage of Jeremiah is the proclamation (xxxix. 31-4) of a new covenant between God and man. A German scholar of our day has the following notes on these verses :—

"As we examine this passage we scarcely know what is its most important characteristic. Is it the *fact* that a new covenant is proclaimed, or the *mode* of its conclusion and the content of the new provisions of the covenant, along with the conditions upon which in the future each individual in Israel is to enter into communion with his God? Each of these characteristics is undoubtedly of equal importance, and if there is one on which peculiar stress should be laid, it is the promise at the end of the passage that the knowledge of God, which includes love to God, shall flow forth like a spring of living water from the hearts of all covenanted members of the human race, *just because* all hearts are to be set free from the crippling pressure of moral guilt. The treading down of sin's consequences is to prepare the ground on which the pillars of the new arch of peace between God and men shall one day rest. Nor can we turn our thoughts from this passage without dwelling for a moment in reverent admiration on the Divine love with its constant renewals of mercy. There was a time, indeed, when God proposed to the human race that they should fulfil a law laid down with outward sanctions, and that a lesser benefit, such as the delivery of Israel from

¹ "Geschichte des Reiches Gottes bis auf Jesus Christus" (1908), p. 257.

² "Jeremiah and Lamentations" (Century Bible), Vol. I, p. 6.

THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

Egypt, should suffice to keep them faithful to the covenant. *It was man's fault* that this earlier plan failed. Then God offered a greater benefit, the bringing back from the Babylonian captivity of the Israel which had deserved punishment, that He might stir up their hearts to repentance and gratitude. What a new and sublime advance of Divine grace on the pathway of the human race !”¹

Many separate passages from this prophet are built like rubies and sapphires into the walls of the Church. Henry Martyn was thinking of an early text when he wrote in his diary :—

“ Was ashamed to confess to——that I was to be Mr. Simeon’s curate, a despicable fear of man from which I vainly thought myself free. He, however, asked me if I was not to be, and so I was obliged to tell him. Jer. I. 17.”²

Sydney Dobell quotes from I. 7, in a letter written to Charlotte Brontë from Coxhorne on 21 May, 1851 :—

“ Lifting my eyes in the sunshine of yesterday to the flowering orchards above me, the ‘summer snow’ that stretches away southwards to the hills, and the very Avalon of apple-trees that makes ‘an awful rose of dawn’ towards the east, an impulse seized me to tempt you with a description of their beauty. But I threw down my pen, guiltless of a line or a word, and able only to cry out, with the Prophet, in my heart :—

“ ‘ Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak ; for I am a child.’ ”³

The words of I. 10, “ I have set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms,” were relied on by Pope Innocent III to support the doctrine that the Papacy had power over the Empire.

“ As the moon derives its light from the sun,” he wrote, “ and in truth is less than the sun in quantity and quality as well as in place and effect, so the imperial power derives the splendour of its dignity from papal authority ; the closer it clings to that the more it shines, the farther it recedes the paler it becomes.”⁴

Thoughts of spring are associated with the vision of the

¹ Prof. E. König of Bonn, “ The Consummation of the Old Testament in Jesus Christ,” “ Expositor,” July, 1912.

² Entry of 22 April, 1803.

³ “ Life and Letters of Sydney Dobell,” Vol. I, p. 218.

⁴ Quoted by Henry Dwight Sedgwick, “ Italy in the Thirteenth Century,” Vol. I, p. 65.

THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

almond-tree (I. 11, 12) and with the Divine words, "I watch over my word to perform it" (R.V.).

Prof. Peake suggests that Jeremiah "brooding on his vocation and all which it portended, sees before him the rod of an almond-tree, and in response to the Divine inquiry utters its name. The English reader can at first see no connexion between the object and the lesson drawn from it, and when he learns that the Hebrew word for almond-tree is *shākēd*, and that translated 'watch' is *shōkēd*, he is tempted to imagine that he has to do merely with a play upon words. That, however, would be a great mistake. The almond-tree bears the name here given to it just because, blossoming as early as January, it is the first to wake into new life after the sleep of winter. For the prophet the sight of the tree is more than a coincidence. Nature is a parable of God's working. Hence he sees in this harbinger of the spring a sign that the hard frost is about to break and new life to spring from the soil."¹

We may compare with this passage the lines of the Hungarian poet Lenau on the early primrose:—

"Leiser denn alle
Blumen der Wiese
Hast du geschlummert
Primula veris."

["Lighter than any
Flower of the meadow
You have been sleeping
Primula veris."]

He adds:—

"Holde, dich nenn' ich
Blume des Glaubens."

["Sweet one, I call you
The trusting-heart's flower."]

From the words of III. 19, "How shall I put thee among the children?" Richard Cameron preached his first sermon in Annandale.

"The first place they sent him to, to preach," says Patrick

¹ "Jeremiah and Lamentations, Vol. I, p. 8.

Walker, "was Annandale. He said, 'How could he go there? for he knew not what sort of people they were'. Mr. Welsh said, 'Go your way, Ritchie; set the fire of hell to their tail'. The first day he preached upon that text, 'How shall I put thee among the children?' In the application, he said, 'Put you among the children, the offspring of robbers and thieves!' Many have heard of Annandale thieves. Some of them, who got a merciful cast that day, told it afterwards that it was the first field-preaching that ever they heard; and that they went out of curiosity to see how a minister would preach in a tent and people sit on the ground: but if many of them went without an errand they got one that day."¹ The contrast between Mr. Welsh's instructions and the text chosen by Cameron helps us to understand the underlying gentleness of the hero of Airmoss.

Defoe's saddler of Aldgate, in the "Journal of the Plague Year," noted the wicked behaviour of the frequenters of the Pye Tavern, Houndsditch, and thought of the prophet's words.

"It could not but seem reasonable," he wrote, "to believe that God would not think fit to spare by His mercy such openly declared enemies, that should insult His name and being, defy His vengeance, and mock at His worship and worshippers, at such a time;—no, not though His mercy had thought fit to bear with, and spare them at other times; that this was a day of visitation, a day of God's anger; and those words came into my thought—Jeremiah v. 9, 'Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord, and shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?'"

VI. 14.—*They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly.*

J. M. Neale, in his sermon on this text, quotes a passage from the "Considerations of Blessed Angela di Foligno," who lived in the beginning of the thirteenth century:—

"Once on a time in the May season our dearest Mother walked in the garden; and she saw the gardener hacking a fig-tree most cruelly with a hooked iron. To whom she said: 'Why hack you this pretty fig-tree?' The other answered: 'Mother, that it may bring forth fruit'. At another time, walking by

¹ "Six Saints of the Covenant," Vol. I, pp. 219, 220.

the said fig-tree, she beheld the gardener pulling off the leaves. Then she gently and sweetly asked : ‘ Why destroy these leaves, wherein the fowls of the air take great delight ? ’ And the other, ‘ Mother, that it may bear more fruit ’. Yet another time she beheld the fig-tree well-nigh torn up by the roots, and lo ! the gardener and other sisters were laying paving stones under them ; again she demanded why—and they made answer, ‘ That the roots may not strike deeply into the earth, that the tree may work its sap ’. Then our Mother said to our Sister Camilla, now with the Lord.—I, the writer then standing by—‘ What ! shall this tree be pruned and lopped that it may bring forth fruit, and shall not we have the pruning-knife of penitence to cut away the evil branches of dead works, and the leaves of worldly vanities ?—And shall it have stones under its roots that they penetrate not the ground, and shall not we delight in all manner of hardness which prevents us from being of the earth, earthy ? God forbid.”¹

VIII. 7.—*Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times, etc.*

“ He that hath given the stork, the crane, the swallow to know their appointed time, will surely keep His time appointed. When we have had in this world a long night of sad darkness, will not the day breaking, and the arising of the Sun of Righteousness be then seasonable ? ”—RICHARD BAXTER.

x. 21.—*The pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord : therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered.*

Thomas Binney chose this text for a sermon preached before the Congregational Union, entitled “ The Closet and the Church ”. In it these words occur :—

“ This, then, is the defect that poisons everything ;—they are not men of frequent, earnest, private devotion. They have great abilities, but they do not pray. They are ministers of Christ, according to outward order—but they do not pray. They are good, and perhaps even great preachers—but they do not pray. They are fervent, pungent, persuasive, convincing—but they do not pray. . . . And this one thing, their ‘ restrain-

¹ “ Sermons for the Church Year,” Vol. I, pp. 16, 17.

ing prayer,' their not 'calling upon God,' their 'not seeking after,' nor 'stirring up themselves to take hold' of Him; this, like the want of love in the Christian character, stains the glory of everything else."

XII. 5.—*If thou hast run with the footmen.*

Alexander Peden may have had this verse in mind when he wrote to the prisoners in Dunnottar Castle (July, 1685): "It is honourable to be a footman in Christ's company, and run at Christ's foot from morning to evening; the weakest in all Christ's company will not tire to go and ride time about, for Christ will take His friends on behind Him; when they begin to weary and do not hold foot, Christ will wait on them."¹

XII. 5.—*How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?*

Archbishop Tait wrote in 1853 from Carlisle Deanery, when a cholera visitation was expected: "I have been reading since church Goulburn's sermon, 'The swelling of the Jordan'. . . . The fact that our first case of Asiatic cholera has proved fatal, and that the man was buried early this morning in St. Cuthbert's Churchyard, calls us with loud voice to be ready."²

xv. 16.—When Samuel Rutherford was dying he often repeated the text, "Thy Word was found, and I did eat it, and it was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart".

xvii. 5, 7.—General Gordon quoted this passage in his Khar-toum diary:—

"'Cursed (thus saith the Lord) is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord'; therefore *cursed is he of the Lord*, who hopes by any arrangement of forces, or by exterior help, to be relieved from the position we are in. Jer. xvii. 7: 'Blessed (thus saith the Lord) is he that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is,' therefore blessed is he 'of the Lord' who makes all his arrangements of forces, without any reliance on such arrangements, or on any exterior help, but trusts in the Lord. How impossible for man alone to accept these views, for with what heart can he make his arrangements if he does not trust in their success! Curious verses, Ezekiel xxix. 10-14, as to Egypt being

¹ "Six Saints of the Covenant," Vol. I, p. 113.

² "Life of Archbishop Tait," Vol. I, p. 182.

waste for forty years from the Tower of Syene (Assouan) to the frontier of Ethiopia; it is certainly the Soudan which is meant, and it is in a fair way of being a desert."

On the passages from Jeremiah the editor of "Gordon's Journal" writes:—

"At first sight there might seem something of a contradiction in these sentiments, but, when weighed, they will be found consistent and sound. They convey an idea which was constantly at work in General Gordon's mind, and this to the effect that man should make every effort towards the attainment of perfection, and then, and not till then, leave the issue to God; that he should, in fact, draw on all earthly resources—as the instrument of God—and that, these exhausted, he should then look to Heaven for aid not to be drawn from earth."

XVIII. 1-6.—*The potter's vessel* (with Rom. ix. 22).

F. W. Robertson wrote from Oxford to his father at the age of twenty-four, two or three months before he was ordained:—

"The translation of Romans ix. 22 is quite literal. If —— will compare the parallel passage, Jeremiah XVIII., from which it seems plain that this was taken, she will see that here, as there, the leading idea is God's endurance, and sovereign right of making the clay which was originally a marred vessel, a perfect one; and that it was a perversion to infer from the expressions 'fitted to destruction' that they were so fitted by Him."¹

XVIII. 7, 8.—In his "Journal of the Plague Year," Defoe wrote: "Doubtless the visitation itself is a stroke from heaven upon a city, or country, or nation, where it falls, a messenger of His vengeance, and a loud call to that nation, or country, or city, to humiliation and repentance, according to that of the prophet Jeremiah XVIII. 7, 8, 'At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them'."

xx. 7.—"Out of the heart of crushing perplexities I heard Jeremiah say, in words that on less hallowed lips would have been deemed profane, 'O Lord, Thou hast deceived me, and I

¹ "Life and Letters," Library Edition, p. 26.

was deceived'. I listened to the Psalmist's lowly and confiding voice moaning softly as the dove moans through the silent woods in summer, 'Thou tellest my flittings, put my tears into Thy bottle; are not these things noted in Thy book?'—DORA GREENWELL.¹

XXII. 10.—*Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him: but weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.*

Baroness Bunsen wrote to Abeken: "I would once more urge my old arguments, that you are staying too long in a state of expatriation—that a man expatriated is 'shorn of his beams'—despoiled of half his powers of usefulness, checked in his development, nay perhaps warped in his moral growth, and becomes not that which he was intended to be."²

XXII. 10.—*He shall return no more.*

When the result of the election of 1880 was announced to Lord Beaconsfield, he observed, "They," meaning his friends, "will come in again, but I shall not". A year later he died.³

XXII. 29.—*O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord.*

Baroness Bunsen wrote at the age of seventy-five:—

"When at Grindelwald we heard a sermon such as I reckon among events in life—the text being from Jeremiah, 'Land, land, hear the word of the Lord'. The sermon was long and eloquent in simplicity and earnestness—closing with a charge, that the reading of the word of God should be accompanied with prayer of the heart, and then it would never fail of its effect. The preacher said, 'You will forget the sermon, but at least, remember the text, and act according to it'."⁴

XXIII. 6.—*This is His name whereby He shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness.*

Coventry Patmore wrote in 1863 to his little daughter:—

"I am rejoiced to think that you know and feel too thoroughly that the only way to be happy is to be good and true, for it to be necessary to say anything about that—except to re-

¹ "Colloquia Crucis."

² "Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen," Vol. II, p. 21.

³ James Bryce, "Studies in Contemporary Biography," p. 16.

⁴ Cf. the German translation: "O Land, Land, Land, höre des Herrn Wort!"

mind you that the way to be continually *more* happy is to be continually *more* entirely good, and that the only way to be really good is to love Christ, and to have the power of *His* goodness (whose name is 'The Lord our Righteousness') in yourself."¹

xxv. 31.—*He will plead with all flesh* (with 2 Cor. v. 20.—*Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us : we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God*).

The Interpreter in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" led Christian into a private room, "and bid his man open a door, the which when he had done Christian saw the picture of a very grave person hung up against the wall, and this was the fashion of it : It had eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in his hand, the law of truth was written upon its lips, the world was behind his back, it stood as if it pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over his head."

xxvi. 14.—*As for me, behold I am in your hand : do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you.*

We read in the history of Port-Royal that the Abbé de Saint-Cyran had a presentiment that his enemies in high places were seeking a pretext for arresting him. On the morning of Ascension Day he said to M. Le Maître, "On this holy day nothing is likely to happen, but I cannot be sure about to-morrow". In the evening, on returning to his home, he asked, as his custom was, that a passage of Scripture should be read aloud to him ; they lighted on that verse of Jeremiah, "As for me, behold I am in your hand," etc. ("Ecce in manibus vestris" . . .). He remarked, "That's a text for me !" ("Voilà pour moi !")²

xxx. 3.—*I have loved thee with an everlasting love.*

When Dr. John Owen was dying, he used these words :—

"I am going to Him whom my soul has loved ; or rather, who has loved me with an everlasting love, which is the whole ground of my consolation. I am leaving the ship of the Church in a storm [it was one month after Lord William Russell's execution], but while the Great Pilot is in it the loss of a poor under-rower will be inconsiderable. Live and pray, and hope and wait

¹ "Memoirs of Coventry Patmore," Vol. II, p. 121.

² "Sainte-Beuve, Port-Royal," Vol. I, p. 484.

patiently and do not despond : the promise stands invincible that He will never leave us nor forsake us."

Bunyan wrote in "Grace Abounding":—

"But the next day at even, being under many fears, I went to seek the Lord, and as I prayed, I cried, and my soul cried to Him in these words, with strong cries, 'O Lord, I beseech Thee, show me that Thou hast loved me with everlasting love' (Jer. xxxi. 3). I had no sooner said it, but with sweetness this returned upon me, as an echo, or sounding again, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love'. Now I went to bed in quiet; also when I awakened the next morning, it was fresh upon my soul, and I believed it."

xxxI. 21.—*Set thine heart toward the highway.*

When Christian and Hopeful were belated in By-path Meadow, they heard for their encouragement the voice of one saying: "Let thine heart be toward the highway; even the way that thou wentest; turn again".

xxxI. 25.—Dora Greenwell wrote in "The Patience of Hope":—

"Our Lord says, 'I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly'; life in its abundance, not in its mere continuity, which, at least to some spirits, would offer little to attract or satisfy. But what if we receive the saying in its intensity—'the fulness of life'—extended capacities, enlarged affections, with infinite wisdom and love to meet and answer them. 'My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, for I have satiated the weary soul, and replenished every sorrowful soul.'"

xxxvi. 6.—*Read in the roll.*

Christian "would be often reading in the roll that one of the shining ones gave him, by which he was refreshed".

xlIII. 12.—*I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods.*

From this text John Foster preached a memorable missionary sermon.

xlV. 5.—*Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not.*

"In a quiet country churchyard in Somerset, facing the East, under the shelter of the church, where the morning sun falls on his grave, lies the body of the great Bishop Ken. Go into the

church and look back a little more than 200 years in the register of deaths, and you will see his name recorded with the simple description written after it: 'Thomas, late Bishop of Bath and Wells, deprived'. Here was the man who took as the motto of his life:—

‘Seekest thou for thyself great things?

Seek them not.’

He resisted the wrong-doing of three kings, thinking nothing of honour and preferment, and he lives now in the hearts of many a Christian soul, who, cheered by the sweet strain of his morning and evening hymns, thanks God for a Bishop who did justly and loved mercy and walked humbly with his God.”—CANON NEWBOLT.

XLV. 5.—As a Cambridge undergraduate Henry Martyn was known as “the man who had not lost an hour,” so assiduous were his habits of industry. “A friend,” he said, “attempted to persuade me that I ought to attend to reading, not for the praise of men but for the glory of God. This seemed to me strange but reasonable. I resolved therefore to maintain the opinion thenceforth, but never designed, that I remember, that it should affect my conduct.” Yet still he read the Bible and “said a prayer or two rather through fear than from any other cause”. But light gradually broke on his mind, and spiritual truth by degrees entered his heart. “Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not,” were words which flashed across his memory as he entered the senate-house to compete for academic distinction. “I obtained my highest wishes, but was surprised to find I had grasped a shadow.”

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

I. 12.—*Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?*

DR. JOHN DUNCAN said: "Protestant as I am, even image-worship does appeal to a part of man's nature. There is an old stone of granite by the roadside, as you wind up the hill at old Buda, upon which a worn and defaced image of the Saviour is cut, which I used often to pass. Below the granite block are the words—'O vos omnes qui transitis per viam, attendite, et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus'. The thorough woe-begoneness of that image used to haunt me long: that old bit of granite—the beau ideal of human sorrow, weakness, and woebegoneness. To this day it will come back upon me, and always with that dumb gaze of perfect calmness—no complaining—the picture of meek and mute suffering. The memory of it comes up fresh as when I first looked upon it; and yet it is a purely human feeling, it is not spiritual."¹

Richard Baxter applied this text to the sufferings of our Lord. "We will scarce hear or regard the dolorous voice; nor scarce turn aside to view the wounds of Him who turned aside and took us up to heal our wounds at this so dear a rate. But oh, then our perfected souls will feel as well as hear, and, with feeling apprehensions, flame again in love for love."

John Donne chose the words of III. 1, "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath" as the text of the first sermon he preached, after the funeral of his wife.

III. 22.—*It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.*

This text was quoted by Melanchthon in the first letter he wrote on returning to Wittenberg after the war of 1546-7 which ended in the defeat and capture of the Elector John

¹ "Colloquia Peripatetica."

Frederick of Saxony. He called Wittenberg at that time "our Sarepta" and "our Troy". Though he received invitations from other universities, he could not bear to go far from the town where he had worked for twenty-eight years, and which had been the cradle of the Reformation. During his exile he lived first at Zerbst and afterwards at Nordhausen, watching for an opportunity to return. The letter addressed to his friend, Joachim Moeller, begins, "Carissime Ioachime, Misericordiae Domini, quia non consumpti sumus, inquit Jeremias".¹

III. 23.—*They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

Cardinal Vaughan was a very young man when he wrote, in criticizing his own spiritual life: "There must be somewhere a great hiatus—I could not have remained what I am so long if I had not made a mistake somewhere. I must have been blundering to work with wrong tools. But enough of all this. I must begin again, and begin every morning, and so I will. If I live for over fifty years, and by that time have learnt never to criticize, to become quieter and gentler in manner, I shall have done something."²

III. 27.—*It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.*

Frederic Shields, the artist, chose this text as the motto of the autobiographical notes which he began to write shortly before his death.

IV. 15.—*They cried unto them, Depart ye; it is unclean; depart, depart, touch not: when they fled away and wandered, they said among the heathen, They shall no more sojourn there.*

A Japanese legend tells that when the Buddhist priest Genno, after much weary travel, came to the moor of Nasu, and was about to rest under the shadow of a great stone, a spirit suddenly appeared and said, "Rest not under this stone. This is the Death Stone. Men, beasts, and birds have perished by merely touching it."³

¹ "Corp. Ref.," Vol. VI, col. 614.

² J. G. Snead-Cox, "Life of Cardinal Vaughan," Vol. I, pp. 50, 51.

³ F. Hadland Davis, "Myths and Legends of Japan," p. 93.

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL.

BISHOP KING of Lincoln wrote: "I delight in Ezekiel, with the rainbow round about, and the brightness. He is the prophet of hope." And again: "Do you know Ezekiel? He is the prophet of *hope* to me, the *rainbow* and *brightness round about*. The prophet Ezekiel, with his vision of the dry bones, and the water increasing, flowing from the Temple, is full of progress and hope. The prophets are a great help to me."¹

The life and character of Ezekiel had a singular fascination for William Blake. When a child he ran into the house and said he had seen the prophet Ezekiel under a tree in the fields. One of his most remarkable engravings is inscribed: "Ezekiel: 'Take away from thee the desire of thine eyes' (Ezek. xxiv. 16). Painted and engraved by W. Blake. October 27, 1794, 13 Hercules Buildings." Ezekiel kneels with arms crossed and eyes uplifted in stern and tearless grief, according to God's command; beside him is one of those solemn bowed figures, with hidden face and hair sweeping the ground, which Blake, often, and with such powerful effect, introduces: and on a couch in the background lies the shrouded corpse of Ezekiel's wife."²

1. 1.—*The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.*

Mr. T. R. Glover in his "Angus Lectures" (1913) tells the following story on the authority of Mr. C. F. Andrews, of Delhi:—

"On one of the great trunk roads of India a missionary saw a woman measuring herself in prostrations along the ground—a familiar form of pilgrimage. Through dust and dirt and heat she moved onward, lying down, marking the farthest point her hand could reach, and rising and starting again from that point to prostrate herself and reach forward again. She must have

¹ "Spiritual Letters," pp. 85, 113.

² Alexander Gilchrist, "Life of William Blake," p. 135.

made seven or eight hundred prostrations to cover a mile. He asked where she was going, and she named a shrine in the Himalayas, where from some cleft in a valley a burst of natural gas would from time to time leap and take fire in the air and vanish—a fleeting manifestation of God. It meant for her a journey of a thousand miles. Why was she going? ‘Uski darshan,’ she said—two words and no more: ‘Vision of Him!’¹

I. 28.—*As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about* (with Gen. ix. 13.—*I do set my bow in the cloud*).

Lucy Snowe, the heroine of Charlotte Brontë’s “Villette,” says of her first crossing to the Continent: “In my reverie, methought I saw the Continent of Europe, like a wide dreamland, far away. Sunshine lay on it, making the long coast one line of gold; tiniest tracery of clustered town and snow-gleaming tower, of woods deep massed, of heights serrated, of smooth pasturage and veiny stream, embossed the metal-bright prospect. For background, spread a sky, solemn and dark-blue, and—grand with imperial promise, soft with tints of enchantment—strode from north to south a God-bent bow, an arch of hope.”

III. 8.—*I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads.*

William Blake wrote in one of his letters to Mr. Butts:—

“Though I have been very unhappy, I am so no longer. I am again emerged into the light of day.” Later he wrote: “If all the world should set their faces against this” [his “poetic pursuits”], “I have orders to set my face like a flint (Ezek. III. 8) against their faces, and my forehead against their foreheads”.

VIII. 12.—*Chambers of imagery.*

Pym, in Browning’s “Strafford,” uses this passage in pleading vainly with Wentworth to be true to his old allies and to England:—

“—Yes, Wentworth, you
Who never meant to ruin England,—you
Who shake off, with God’s help, an obscene dream
In this Ezekiel chamber, where it crept

¹ “The Christian Tradition and its Verification, pp. 94, 95.

Upon you first, and wake, yourself, your true
And proper self, our Leader, England's Chief,
And Hampden's friend !

This is the proudest day !

Come, Wentworth ! Do not even see the King !
The rough old room will seem itself again !
We'll both go in together ; you've not seen
Hampden so long : come : and there's Fiennes ; you'll have
To know young Vane. This is the proudest day ! ”

XI. 16.—*I will be to them a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.*

Bishop G. H. Wilkinson wrote from Cannes in 1866 :—

“ A perfect town has sprung up since I was last here. There is a lovely little church built by a Mr. Woolfield—a rich man who had been travelling in Palestine and passed here on his way home. He found it so like Palestine that he determined to settle here—built a house and then a church. Over the church porch is this text—‘ I will be to them a little sanctuary in all the countries to which they shall go.’ ”¹

XII. 12.—*And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth.*

It has been said that the fifth Act of life is a tragedy, and this was sadly true in the case of Luther. He was old before the age of sixty and his bodily frame was diseased. His irritability of temper was sometimes a trial to his friends, and still more distressing was his growing intolerance in doctrinal matters. Some of his bitterest attacks on the Swiss date from his closing years. The Prince was passing into the twilight, yet his great intellect remained to the last unclouded. As Adolf Hausrath reminds us, he bore upon his shoulders to the end the care of all the churches. Writing to a friend at Bremen, he described himself as “ a worn-out, lazy, tired, cold, and now one-eyed man,” but he did not allow any of his life's great tasks to slip from his hands. He was closely occupied with literary work, and he went forth for the last time on a patriotic mission of reconciliation to the Counts of Mansfeld. The old man listened gladly to the sound of sleigh-bells at Eisleben. The

¹ “ Memoir,” Vol. I, p. 151.

boys and girls of the rival families had made friends, and were dashing down the valley side by side. The Mansfelds of the rising generation would forget the old quarrels. The "Prince" could lay his burden down.

XIII. 4.—*Thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts.*

The fox in the Middle Ages was the recognized symbol of heresy.

XIV. 14.—*Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God.*

A guest at Luther's table asked the Doctor whether there was not some discrepancy between the words of Ezekiel in this passage and the saying of the Lord to Abraham in Genesis XVIII. 32, "I will not destroy it for ten's sake". Luther replied: "There is no discrepancy. The explanation is that in Ezekiel these men were forbidden to pray, and this was not the case with Abraham. We must see how the words stand. If God says, 'Thou shalt not pray,' one may well cease. . . . I should long ago have given up praying against the Turk if I had had a command; but since I have not got it, I must go on praying."¹

XVI. 63.—"And now," writes Bunyan in "Grace Abounding," "was that word fulfilled on me, and I was also refreshed by it; 'That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord'. Thus was my soul at this time (and as I then did think for ever) set at liberty from being afflicted with my former guilt and amazement."

XVII. 24.—*And have made the dry tree to flourish.*

"Once again I looked up to that sign of love and triumph; then I observed that it was green; some soft bright lichen had sown itself within the deep-cut symbol, and a prophetic word fell upon my spirit: 'The dry tree shall flourish; the cross also shall become green, shall be vivified with the heart it vivifies'."

—DORA GREENWELL.

XX. 49.—The African missionary, Dan Crawford, says that "the white man's parable" is one of the ugly native names for

¹ E. Kroker, "Luthers Tischreden," No. 578.

the Christian Gospel—"A taunt this with the old Ezekiel sting in it, 'Ah Lord God! they say of me, doth he not speak parables'." ¹

xxiv. 18.—*So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died.*

The prophet's bereavement forms the subject of the beautiful and familiar poem "Ezekiel" by "B. M.". The dying wife says to her husband:—

"Forbid me not;
Deny me not to Him. A day shall come
When He shall give His Dearest to the death
For thee and me!"

The poem continues:—

"The clouds had parted now,
The love of God was shed abroad, within
My broken heart. I could not say Him nay;
Or question Him. I laid my sacrifice
Upon His altar, not denying Him
Mine only one. . . .

"And when at length
The evening-time of my long day shall come,
And God shall give me leave to lay aside
The Prophet's mournful mantle, for the robe
Of joy and light—when at His gate I find
An everlasting entrance, there my love
Shall meet me smiling."

xxxvii. 3.—It is told of Cardinal Newman that he had an engraving of the City of Oxford hung up in his study with these words written beneath it, "Son of man, can these bones live?"

xxxvii. 4.—*O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.*

In 1654 the dust of the Austrian kings of Spain, and of their consorts who had continued the royal line, was transferred by Philip IV to the splendid sepulchral chamber of the Escorial. Fray Juan de Avellanada pronounced a discourse on the text, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord". He warned the future kings of Spain that they must live well if they wished to

¹ "Thinking Black," p. 4.

sleep by the side of the holy Philip II. Each of the seven coffins was carried by three nobles and three Jeromite friars; the procession was headed by the remains of Isabel of Bourbon, the first queen of Philip IV, and closed by the dust of Charles V.¹

XLVII. 9.—*Everything shall live whither the river cometh.*

“Prophecy seems to point to a great increase of spiritual energy in the Church before the time of our Lord’s second coming, the time of the ‘latter rain,’ which will be given abundantly; nor do we know what channels may be even now preparing for the risen waters, ‘waters to swim in, a river not to be passed over, which shall go down into the desert and into the sea, and which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed.’ ‘And it shall come to pass that everything shall live whither the river cometh.’”²—DORA GREENWELL.

¹ W. Stirling-Maxwell, “The Cloister Life of Charles V”.

² “Two Friends.”

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER wrote to his brother Alfred in 1865 :—

“Pusey’s ‘Daniel the Prophet’ disposes of the rickety and crotchety arguments of those who vainly thought they had found a *ποῦ στῶ* in him whereby to upheave all prophecy and miracle. It is a noble book from its learning and its logic. It is reading round about a subject and not the subject itself which damages the intellect so much. Maurice said the study of the Prophets had saved him from the tyranny of books.”¹

I. 12.—Sir Thomas Browne has some curious observations on dreams and diet. “Even Daniel, the great interpreter of dreams,” he thinks, “in his leguminous diet seems to have chosen no advantageous food for quiet sleeps, according to Grecian physic.”

I. 8, 17.—On the Terrace of Gluttony in Dante’s “Purgatorio,” examples of temperance are recited by voices in the air.

Dr. J. S. Carroll says : “The first, as usual, is from the Virgin’s life: thinking more of the honour of the marriage feast at Cana than of her own mouth, that mouth gained the power to ‘respond’ for men—prayer and intercession being possible only to the temperate. The heathen parallel to Mary is the ancient Roman women who were content with water for their drink. Then follows an example of abstinence from the Old Testament, Daniel who held food cheap, and thereby gained wisdom, for temperance clears the brain as gluttony clogs and blinds it.”²

II. 31.—*Thou, O King, sawest, and behold a great image.*

“In Crete, once fertile, now waste, is situate Mount Ida, where Jove was nursed; and within the cavernous hollow of the

¹ “Tennyson and his Friends,” p. 64.

² “Prisoners of Hope,” pp. 308, 309.

mountain there yet stands erect the colossal form of Jove's father Saturn, King of Crete, during the golden age. As the symbol of time, he turns his back on Damietta, for the East is of the past, his face towards Rome, for the West is of the present and the future. In form he is, with slight variations, the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream; his head is of fine gold, his breast and arms of pure silver, his middle of brass, his thighs, legs, and left foot of choice iron, his right foot on which he chiefly rests, of clay. Thus representing the successive ages of the world in their faultless commencement and gradual degeneracy, in all his substance save the gold he is cleft by a deep pressure, whence trickle the tears of human shame and sorrow, till they form streams of force to break through the earth's crust and of volume to form the four subterranean rivers—Acheron, Styx, Phlegethon, and Cocytus.”¹

III.—The Hebrew confessors.

The example of the Hebrew confessors, as we see from a letter written to Spalatin on 21 December, 1520, cheered Luther in the prospect of appearing before the Emperor Charles V at Worms.

“If I am summoned I will go, if I possibly can; I will go ill if I cannot go well. For it is not right to doubt that if I am summoned by the Emperor I am summoned by the Lord. He lives and reigns who saved the three Hebrew children in the furnace of the King of Babylon. If He does not wish to save me, my life is a little thing compared to that of Christ, who was slain in the most shameful way, to the scandal of all and the ruin of many.”

Melanchthon wrote to a friend on 1 March, 1554, that his boarders repeated every day at table four Latin lines praying that Christ would preserve His Church as He saved the three men in the fiery furnace of Babylon.

III. 17, 18.—*If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not—*

The Abbot Eustace in Scott's “Monastery” thus addressed his brethren after the allies of Kennaquhair had been defeated:—

¹ Maria F. Rossetti, “A Shadow of Dante,” pp. 44, 45.

"My brethren, since God has not given our people victory in the combat, it must be because He requires of us, His spiritual soldiers, to fight the good fight of martyrdom, a conflict in which nothing but our own faint-hearted cowardice can make us fail of victory. Let us assume, then, the armour of faith, and prepare, if it be necessary, to die under the ruin of these shrines, to the service of which we have devoted ourselves. Highly honoured are we all in this distinguished summons, from our dear brother Nicholas, whose grey hairs have been preserved until they should be surrounded by the crown of martyrdom, down to my beloved son Edward, who, arriving at the vineyard at the latest hour of the day, is yet permitted to share its toils with those who have laboured from the morning. Be of good courage, my children. I dare not, like my sainted predecessors, promise to you that you shall be preserved by miracle—I and you are alike unworthy of that especial interposition, which in earlier times turned the sword of sacrilege against the bosom of tyrants by whom it was wielded, daunted the hardened hearts of heretics with prodigies, and called down hosts of angels to defend the shrine of God and of the Virgin. Yet, by heavenly aid, you shall this day see that your Father and Abbot will not disgrace the mitre which sits upon his brow."

III. 18.—*But if not—*

"There is to me," wrote Dr. McLeod Campbell, "something exceedingly large in the faith expressed in this alternative answer to Nebuchadnezzar. . . . Our God is able to shed full light upon seeming contradictions; but if He should not, let us not the less firmly hold what we know to be true in that light in which our deepest and highest consciousness of certainty is experienced."¹

Macaulay tells us that on the Sunday of 1688 when the Declaration of Indulgence was to be read in the churches of London, "Samuel Wesley, the father of John and Charles Wesley, a curate in London, took for his text the noble answer of the three Jews to the Chaldean tyrant, 'Be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up'."

¹ "Memorials," Vol. I, p. 241.

VI. 10.—*Daniel . . . kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed.*

We are told that Bishop Lancelot Andrewes spent "a great part of five hours every day" upon his knees.

VI. 10.—*His windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem.*

John Bright referred to this passage in a great speech delivered in October, 1866, in Dublin.

"You will recollect," he said, "that when the ancient Hebrew prophet prayed in his captivity he prayed with his window opened towards Jerusalem. You know that the followers of Mohammed, when they pray turn their faces toward Mecca. When the Irish peasant asks for food, and freedom, and blessing, his eye follows the setting sun; the aspirations of his heart reach beyond the wide Atlantic and in spirit he grasps hands with the great Republic of the West. If this be so, I say, then, that the disease is not only serious, but it is even desperate; but desperate as it is, I believe there is a certain remedy for it, if the people and the Parliament of the United Kingdom are willing to apply it."¹

VI. 23.—*Daniel was taken up out of the den.*

"If the voice of the king were seasonable to Daniel, early in the morning, calling him from his den that he might advance him to more than former dignity; then methinks that morning voice of Christ our King, calling us from our terrors among lions to possess His rest among His saints, should be to us a very seasonable voice."—RICHARD BAXTER.

VIII. 2.—*I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai (with 16.—And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision).*

In the "Heart of Midlothian" (ch. VIII.) Reuben Butler visits David Deans, who is mourning over the death of his wife.

"She's not to be forgotten on this side of time," says the sufferer, "but He that gives the wound can send the ointment. I declare there have been times during this night when my meditation has been so rapt, that I knew not of my heavy loss. It

¹ "Life of John Bright," p. 349.

has been with me as with the worthy John Semple, called Carpharn John, upon a like trial—I have been this night on the banks of Ulai, plucking an apple here and there.”

Sir Walter attributed this saying by mistake to John Semple instead of James Welwood, of whom we read in Patrick Walker’s narrative:—

“That night, after his wife died, he spent the whole ensuing night in prayer and meditation in his garden. The next morning, one of his elders coming to see him and lamenting his great loss and want of rest, he replied, ‘I declare I have not, all night, had one thought of the death of my wife, I have been so taken up with meditating on heavenly things. I have been this night on the banks of Ulai, plucking an apple here and there.’”¹

IX. 21.—*The man Gabriel . . . being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.*

“As when an angel down from heaven doth fly,
Our quick thought cannot keep him company;
We cannot think, ‘Now he is at the sun,
Now through the moon, now he through th’ air doth run’;
Yet when he’s come, we know he did repair
To all ’twixt heaven and earth, sun, moon, and air.”

—JOHN DONNE.

x. 18.—*Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me.*

Bishop G. H. Wilkinson wrote of the week in 1883 when he received the offer of the Bishopric of Truro from Mr. Gladstone:—

“Monday was a day of mercy. George, Harry, Con, Ernie, all who were allowed at Holy Communion, and then (as had been the case yesterday) began the old tender way in which He used to speak to me before the need to wean me from depending on voices obliged Him (I think) to give it up. But it came: ‘Fear not, thou worm Jacob’. ‘Quasi visio hominis, et confortavit me’—the Daniel vision which Cara [his wife] and I—my own, own Cara—read together in our last service.”²

XII.—An Oxford undergraduate wrote of Dean Burgon:—

“He was a beautiful reader, and it was here that his pro-

¹ “Six Saints of the Covenant,” Vol. II, p. 158, note 4.

² “Memoir of G. H. Wilkinson,” Vol. II, p. 17.

found reverence for the sacred Scriptures—every word of them—exhibited itself. The first time that I ever heard him open his lips was to read the first lesson, Daniel xii. ; and the impression made upon me was that no sermon could follow that. It seemed as if the service should appropriately end there. His rendering of verse 2 was sublime. He always read as if some heaven-sent revelation had been lowered before his eyes, not a word of which he had ever seen before, yet each word pregnant with meaning.”¹

xii. 1.—*And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people.*

In the autumn of 1541, when Germany was threatened by the Turks, we find this verse repeatedly quoted in the correspondence of Melanchthon. Terrible stories had been brought to Wittenberg of the cruelty which the Turks were exercising at Buda-Pesth and in the surrounding districts. Writing to Nicholas Medler, to Veit Dietrich, and to Camerarius, Melanchthon recalled the words from Daniel, “Stat dux magnus Michael pro filiis populi sui”. “Let us comfort ourselves,” he says, “with this hope against the Turks and other enemies.” He applied the text to Christ. To Camerarius on 1 December, he wrote: “We hear every day such dreadful news of the fury of the Turks in Pannonia, that I am almost worn to death in thinking of our public dangers and the disasters of the whole world. But I trust the day is at hand of which Daniel speaks: ‘At that time shall Christ stand up as a great prince for the children of His people’.” The anxieties of this winter are mirrored in another letter to the same friend, in which he says: “I do not fear any other wars except with the Turks. I often think of a dream I had last year. I saw us two in a certain high castle on the Elbe, seated amidst a company of listeners; and we were both lecturing on Demosthenes at our ease and in safety, but the Elbe ran red with blood. Let us pray that God may defend these regions.”²

xii. 1.—*Michael . . . the great prince.*

John Addington Symonds wrote, after visiting Mont St. Michel: “The adoration paid to this archangel, who is also the minister of judgment at the last day, has elements of peculiar

¹ “Life of Dean Burgon,” Vol. II, p. 114.

² “Corp. Ref.,” Vol. IV, cols. 703, 713, 714, 722, etc.

charm for our imagination. In England the highest churches are dedicated to him. Dundry is an instance. He inhabits hill-tops, round which winds battle and the clouds chase; which commune with the stars, and give resting-place to the feet of celestial couriers; which invite the lightning, and stand like watch-towers for the armaments of heaven to overlook the outspread land, and see what wars may there be waged against the evil one.”¹

XII. 3.—William Archer Butler closed his study of Bishop Berkeley in the “Dublin University Magazine” with these words:—

“So much for his earthly career—the rest is hidden from our feeble eyes. But if *we* must leave the Christian, the philosopher, the patriot, at the moment when all human biography is compelled to resign its office, we may well believe that the subsequent life is taken up by the pen of angelic recorders. For, assuredly, it was in no unprophetic spirit that this friend of human happiness wrote, when, in the close of his memorable missionary proposal, he declared of the benefactor of man that ‘unseen countries and after ages may feel the effects of his bounty, while he himself reaps the reward in the blessed society of all those who, having turned many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars, for ever and ever.’”

Archdeacon Basil Wilberforce wrote of his brother Ernest, Bishop of Chichester:—

“His religion was of the definite and practical and not at all of the emotional and visionary kind. The text I should like for him would be Daniel XII. 3 (with the justifiable concentration of the sentence), ‘They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever’. He turned many to righteousness through his ministry, and it is well that we should claim for him God’s promise.”²

Phillips Brooks wrote after his visit to the Dorotheen Burial ground, Berlin:—

“It is very interesting indeed to see the two quiet simple monuments of Fichte and Hegel facing each other across the narrow path, which was all wet this afternoon with rain, and

¹ “Life,” by Horatio F. Brown, Vol. I, p. 407.

² J. B. Atlay, “Bishop Ernest Wilberforce,” p. 351.

covered with dead autumn leaves trodden into the ground. Fichte's monument bears on one of its three sides his name, with dates of birth and death ; and on another that of his wife, with the assurance that she was the worthy wife of such a man ; and on the third, the Old Testament text which tells how those who turn many to righteousness shall shine like the stars."¹

Over the resting-place of the saintly Puritan, Francis Holcroft, at Oakington, four miles from Cambridge, the words are inscribed : "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Dr. Stoughton says that the memory of Holcroft still lingers in the neighbourhood of Cambridge, and that old barns in which he ministered were pointed out a few years ago. His last words were : "I know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, I have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens".

XII. 13.—In the Preface to the First Edition of "*Horæ Subsecivæ*," Dr. Brown tells of his sorrow that his father had not lived to see the completion of the book, and mentions that it was at his request that the quotation at the end of the paper on "Arthur Hallam" was placed there. . . . "O man greatly beloved, go thou thy way till the end : for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."²

¹ "Life of Phillips Brooks," Vol. II, p. 376.

² E. T. McLaren, "Letters of Dr. John Brown".

THE MINOR PROPHETS.

RABBI DUNCAN said, "I should like to have some anthems composed to suit certain passages in the Minor Prophets".

HOSEA.

I. 9.—*Call his name Lo-ammi : for ye are not My people.*

Dr. Charles Stanford, in his biography of Doddridge, quotes this passage from the "Axminster Ecclesiastica" as a motto to the chapter on his hero's settlement at Northampton:—

"Oh the wonderfull goodnesse of the Lord to a poor unworthy People ; though he cast them down, yet he hath not cast them away ; Though he hath sorely Rebuk'd them, yet he hath not Destroy'd them ; Though he hath written Bitter things against them, yet he hath not written a Lo-ammi upon them ; Though he hath put out a Burning, shining Light, yet he hath not removed the Candlestick. . . . He hath returned again to a poor Desolate Congregation, and after some time provided another shining Light to be set up in this Candlestick. As may be further recorded in its place. Admired be free grace."

II. 14.—*Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness and speak comfortably unto her [Heb. to her heart.]*

The young Anne Arnauld wrote thus of her first experiences at Port-Royal:—

"I found there not only an external solitude, far separated from the world, a loneliness increased by the position of the place, which was a very pleasing desert and seemed to me to resemble those of the Thebaïd ; but also an inward solitude which sank into my spirit, so that God made me love that separation from the world, according to these words, 'I will lead her into the wilderness and I will speak to her heart'." ¹

¹ Sainte-Beuve, "Port-Royal," Vol. I, p. 182.

II. 19.—*And I will betroth thee unto Me for ever ; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness and in mercies.*

In the autumn of 1522, Spalatin questioned Luther as to the meaning of this text :—

Luther replied : “The passage of Hosea II., ‘I will betroth thee unto Me,’ means simply this, that not by works, but by faith we should become the betrothed of the pitying, merciful, pardoning, justifying God under Christ’s kingdom through the gospel.”¹

II. 21, 22.—“When God says in Hosea, ‘I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth,’ he says also, ‘And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil’. It is easy to decry the literal interpretation of prophecy as carnal and limited ; easy to ask, what better shall we be for hills of corn and barley, and for mountains dropping sweet wine ? but who can look into the world as it now is, without admitting how true, how heaven-sent a blessing material abundance would be, were that within man which is inimical to its true enjoyment taken away.”—DORA GREENWELL.²

XI. 1.—*When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.*

“When Israel *was* a child, God loved him and called his son out of Egypt. He preparatorily sent him *into* Egypt. And the first deliverer of Israel had to know the wisdom of Egypt before the wisdom of Arabia ; and for the last deliverer of Israel, the dawn of infant thought, and the first vision of the earth He came to save, was under the palms of Nile.”—RUSKIN.

XI. 4.—*I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love : and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them.*

“This verse,” Dr. G. A. Smith remarks, “ought to be taken along with that other passage in the great ‘Prophecy of the Exile,’ where God is described as ‘He that led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble ; as a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord gave him rest’ (Is. LXIII. 13, 14).”

¹ Enders, “Luthers Briefwechsel,” Vol. IV, pp. 22, 23.

² “Two Friends.”

"A man has a mystic power of a very wonderful kind upon the animals over whom he is placed. On any of these wintry roads of ours we may see it, when a kind carter gets down at a hill, and throwing the reins on his beast's back, will come to its head and touch it with his bare hands, and speak to it as if it were his fellow; till the deep eyes fill with light, and out of these things, so much weaker than itself, a touch, a glance, a word, there will come to it new strength to pull the stranded waggon onward. The man is as a god to the beast, coming down to help it, and it almost makes the beast human that he does so. Not otherwise does Hosea feel the help which God gives His own on the weary hills of life."¹

JOEL.

Prof. Robertson Smith said that in the first chapter of the prophecy of Joel "every verse sparkles with gems. Every little picture, suggested rather than drawn, is in the most exquisite harmony with the feeling of the prophet. The fig-tree stripped of its bark, standing white against the arid landscape; the sackcloth-girt bride wailing for her husband; the night watch of the supplicating priests; the empty and ruinous garners; the perplexed rush of the herds maddened with heat and thirst; or the unconscious supplication in which they raise their heads to heaven with piteous lowing, are indicated with a concrete pregnancy of language which the translator vainly tries to reproduce."²

II. 25.—*I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten.*

"We will trust God. The blank interstices
Men take for ruins, He will build into
With pillared marbles rare, or knit across
With generous arches, till the fane's complete.
This world has no perdition, if some loss."

—MRS. BROWNING.³

II. 28.—*Your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.*

¹ "The Book of the Twelve Prophets," Vol. I, p. 296.

² Lectures and Essays, p. 419. ³ "Casa Guidi Windows.

"The degree of the soul's creativeness in sleep might furnish no whimsical criterion of the quantum of poetical faculty resident in the same soul waking. An old gentleman, a friend of mine, and a humorist, used to carry this notion so far, that when he saw any stripling of his acquaintance ambitious of becoming a poet, his first question would be, 'Young man, what sort of dreams have you?'"—CHARLES LAMB.

III. 2.—*I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for My people and for My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted My land.*

"It seems to have been a common opinion (says the Rev. H. F. Cary) among the Jews, as well as among many Christians, that the general judgment will be held in the valley of Josaphat, or Jehoshaphat."

In canto x. of Dante's "Inferno," the poet says to Virgil, as he looks at the open sepulchres in the heretic city of Dis:—

"May those

Who lie within these sepulchres, be seen?

Already all the lids are raised, and none

O'er them keeps watch."

Virgil answers:—

"They shall be closed all; what time they here

From Josaphat return'd shall come, and bring

Their bodies, which above they now have left."

III. 21.—Bunyan tells us, in "Grace Abounding," that he was cheered by that word, "I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in Zion". "These words I thought were sent to encourage me to wait still upon God; and signified unto me, that if I were not already, yet time might come, I might be in truth converted unto Christ."

AMOS.

v. 8.—When the day broke in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, Christian said, "He hath turned the shadow of death into the morning".

Mark Rutherford says in his life of Bunyan:—

"This is from the prophet Amos, and it may not be amiss to

quote it with the context, 'Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth; the Lord is His name: That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress.'"

OBADIAH.

"The Book of Obadiah at the beginning of the Exile and the great prophecy of the Servant at the end of it—how true was his word who said: 'He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him'."—G. A. SMITH.

JONAH.

Dr. F. Godet wrote to a Neuchâtel student who had removed to Leipzig:—

"So you are launched on the great sea! As you have not embarked, like Jonah, to flee from your mission, but on the contrary to gain the right equipment for fulfilling it, I have no fear of shipwreck. . . . Throw overboard all perishable stuff; the dross, as Paul says, and fill your ship with the precious cargo. Accept nothing that does not bear the mark of Jesus. My experience is that in the ministry all else is like damaged goods. *He* has the key of souls, *He* calms the inner deeps of the heart, *He* transforms the very root of the will, *He* is understood of the souls which are to form the flock of God. Contemplate Him! Feed upon Him and you will live" (7 Nov. 1870).¹

I. 6.—An aged Christian in his eighty-ninth year, who had been a communicant of the Church of England since January, 1828, wrote from Bristol: "In 1824 I heard Dr. Ryland preach the funeral sermon of Robert Hall. One remark made a strong impression. He referred to Mr. Hall's conversion in his thirteenth year, and I felt that though I was just that age I had not experienced the needful change. But not many months after, in 1825, in a sermon to young people, the preacher took for his

¹ "Frédéric Godet" (1913), p. 389.

text, 'What meanest thou, O sleeper?' (Jonah i. 6). From this I date the arousing call, leading to true conversion, from which I have never lapsed, though often lacking in zeal and love."

III. 4.—*And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*

Defoe says in his "Journal of the Plague Year": "Some were so enthusiastically bold as to run about the streets, with their oral predictions, pretending they were sent to preach to the city; and one, in particular, who, like Jonah to Nineveh, cried in the streets, 'Yet forty days and London shall be destroyed'—I will not be positive whether he said, 'Yet forty days,' or 'Yet a few days'."

IV. 6.—*The Lord God prepared a gourd.*

Lucy Snowe, the heroine of *Villette*, says of her first morning in the City of London, close to St. Paul's Cathedral: "Above my head, above the house-tops, co-elevate almost with the clouds, I saw a solemn, orbéd mass—the Dome. While I looked, my inner self moved; my spirit shook its always-fettered wings half-loose; I had a sudden feeling as if I, who never yet truly lived, were at last about to taste life. In that morning my soul grew as fast as Jonah's gourd".

MICAH.

III. 12.—*Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.*

In the "Reminiscences" of Dr. Andrew Bonar we read: "A beautiful incident, which he often related, occurred at Kelso when Mr. Bonar was on a visit to his brother Horatius. He was addressing a meeting there, and when showing some ears of barley which he had plucked on Mount Zion, he said, 'If God keeps His threatenings so faithfully (Micah III. 12) will He not keep His promises?' Next day an old woman sent for him, and as soon as he entered her house, she held up her hands and exclaimed, 'Oh, those ears of barley! those ears of barley!' He asked her what she meant, and she said she had just thought

when he was speaking the night before that if God kept His word about ears of barley would He not keep it about the salvation of a soul? And all her doubts fled."

VI. 3.—*O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify unto Me.*

Dr. G. A. Smith translates the text :—

"My people, what have I done unto thee? and how have I wearied thee?—answer Me!"

The words are used among the Good Friday Reproaches in the Roman Missal :—

"O my people, what have I done to thee? or in what have I afflicted thee? answer Me. Because I led thee out of the land of Egypt, thou hast prepared a cross for thy Saviour."

Dr. John Duncan said : "One of the finest devotional pieces I know occurs in the 'Missale Romanum'. It is in the 'Mass of the Presanctified' for Good Friday, in which the refrain occurs, 'Quid feci tibi populo meo'?"¹

VI. 8.—*To do justly.*

In Dante's "Paradise" the just kings of every age and land in the form of starry lights spell out, letter by letter, the opening words of the Book of Wisdom : "Diligite justitiam qui judicatis terram," each adding his contribution to the celestial Empire of universal righteousness.

It is recorded in the biography of Lord Russell's sister Katherine (Mary Baptist Russell), that the future nun was accustomed in early years to hold spiritual conference with her brothers and sisters in Killowen. The subject proposed by her on one occasion was, "What was the best way to become a saint". The unanimous opinion of the youthful theologians was, "To do our daily duties as well as ever we can, and to do them in the presence of God, to please Him".

VII. 9.—*He will bring me forth to the light.*

"Some one asked the Prophet the explanation of the passage in the Koran, 'God opens to Islam the heart of him whom he chooses to direct'. 'That is spoken,' said the Prophet, 'of the light which God sheds in the heart.' 'And how can man recognize that light?' he was asked. 'By his detachment from this

¹ "Colloquia Peripatetica."

world of illusion and by a secret drawing towards the eternal world,' the Prophet replied."¹

NAHUM.

"Nahum's Book is one great *At Last*."—G. A. SMITH.

II. 3.—*The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men are in scarlet.*

In the Heaven of Mars, in Dante's "Paradise," are placed the soldiers of the Cross. "Across the glowing surface of the planet a great white cross shone like the Milky Way, and through its light Christ Himself flashed forth mysteriously. Souls of martyrs and crusaders in the form of 'ruby splendours' moved up and down and from side to side along the white pathway of the Cross, singing as they moved a song of praise of which Dante understood only the words 'Arise and conquer'."²

HABAKKUK.

"I should have liked excessively to have known Habakkuk," said Ruskin.³

II. 4.—*The just shall live by his faith.*

Principal Smith translates the words, "But the righteous shall live by his faithfulness".

"This word, wrongly translated *faith* by the Greek and other versions," he observes, "is concentrated by Paul in his repeated quotation from the Greek upon that single act of faith by which the sinner secures forgiveness and justification. With Habakkuk it is a wider term. 'Emunah,' from a verb meaning originally to be firm, is used in the Old Testament in the physical sense of steadfastness. So it is applied to the arms of Moses held up by Aaron and Hur over the battle with Amalek: *they were steadiness till the going down of the sun*. . . . Let the righteous, however baffled his faith be by experience, hold on in loyalty to God and duty, and he shall live. Though St. Paul, as we have said, used the Greek rendering of *faith* for the enforcement of trust in God's mercy through Jesus Christ as the secret of forgiveness

¹ "Confessions of Al Ghazzali," translated by Claud Field, p. 19.

² J. S. Carroll, "In Patria," p. 235.

³ E. T. Cook, "Life of Ruskin," Vol. I, p. 479.

and life, it is rather to Habakkuk's wider intention of patience and fidelity that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews returns in his fuller quotation of the verse: 'For yet a little while and He that shall come will come and will not tarry; now the just shall live by faith, but if He draw back My soul shall have no pleasure in him'.¹

II. 20.—*Let all the earth keep silence before Him.*

In the highest period of Egyptian religious thought, the period preceding sacerdotalism and decay, we get something akin to mysticism. God is alluded to as "Lord of the silent" and as He "who cometh to the silent," "Thou sweet Well for him that thirsteth in the desert; it is closed to him who speaks, but it is open to him who is silent. When he who is silent comes, lo, he finds the well." To those who ardently desire comes, we read, a great religious experience. "Then is Amon found coming in peace with the sweet air before him."²

III. 2.—*Revive Thy work.*

Malcolm Macmillan, grandfather of the London publisher, Alexander Macmillan, was an elder of the Established Church in Arran, and devout and regular in family worship, but he looked with distrust on the revivalist movement promoted by the Haldanes in the last years of the eighteenth century. He, however, allowed his children to attend the meetings of the missionaries in Arran. Alexander Macmillan, writing in 1860, stated his belief that he and all his family owed incalculable blessings to the revivals. "Whatever prosperity has come to us as a family is, in a great measure, owing to the effect they had on the moral, spiritual, and intellectual condition of my parents. . . . I remember my mother telling me that there was a belief prevalent, even amongst the 'godly,' that evil spirits had actually haunted the island before the 'coming of the gospel'—the Revivals—among the people, but they had all fled before its light."

III. 2.—J. H. Newman wrote in his Journal in 1859:—

"Thy hand is not straitened that it cannot save. 'Domine, opus tuum in medio annorum vivifica illud; in medio annorum

¹ "The Book of the Twelve Prophets," Vol. II, pp. 140, 141.

² The "Spectator" for 9 November, 1912. (In a review of Prof. Breasted's book "Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt.")

notum facies.' It is plain that what I feel, Thy servants have from the earliest times felt before me; Job, Moses, Habacuc felt as I feel thousands of years ago, and I am able to plead with Thee in their never-dying words."¹

III. 17, 18.—*Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

J. W. Burgon wrote to a friend in 1845 that he had dined with Mr. Newman at Oriel. "He was so very kind, at my request, as to write some words for me at the end of a beautiful Greek Testament I use. Perhaps you will like to know the words he chose; they are from Habakkuk III. 17, 18."²

Dr. Dibdin, when a boy, heard John Newton preach his wife's funeral sermon at St. Mary Woolnoth, and describes him as having a tremulous voice, and as wearing the "costume of the full-bottomed wig". He spoke at first feebly and leisurely, but as he warmed, his ideas and periods seemed mutually to enlarge; the tears trickled down his cheeks, and his action and expression were at times quite out of the ordinary course of things. It was the 'mens agitans molem et magno se corpore miscens'. In fact the preacher was one with his discourse. To this day I have not forgotten his text, Hab. III. 17, 18: 'Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.' Newton always preached extemporaneously."

ZEPHANIAH.

Principal G. A. Smith thinks that Zephaniah was probably of royal descent, and that he lived in Jerusalem.

"For so young a man the vision of Zephaniah may seem strangely dark and final. Yet not otherwise was Isaiah's inaugural vision, and as a rule it is the young and not the old

¹ Wilfrid Ward, "Life of Cardinal Newman," Vol. I, p. 576.

² "Life of Dean Burgon," Vol. I, p. 143.

whose indignation is ardent and unsparing. Zephaniah carries this temper to the extreme. There is no great hope in his book, hardly any tenderness, and never a glimpse of beauty. A townsman, Zephaniah has no eye for nature; not only is no fair prospect described by him, he has not even a single metaphor drawn from nature's loveliness or peace. He is pitilessly true to his great key-notes: 'I will sweep, sweep from the face of the ground; He will burn,' burn up everything. No hotter book lies in all the Old Testament. Neither dew nor grass nor tree, nor any blossom lives in it, but it is everywhere fire, smoke, and darkness, drifting chaff, ruins, nettles, salt-pits, and owls and ravens looking from the windows of desolate palaces. Nor does Zephaniah foretell the restoration of nature in the end of the days. There is no prospect of a redeemed and fruitful land, but only of a group of battered and hardly saved characters; a few meek and righteous are hidden from the fire and creep forth when it is over. Israel is left *a poor and humble folk*. No prophet is more true to the doctrine of the remnant, or more resolutely refuses to modify it. Perhaps he died young." ¹

HAGGAI.

"A strange legend, founded on the doubtful verse which styles him 'the messenger of Jehovah,' gave out that Haggai, as well as for similar reasons 'Malachi' and John the Baptist, were not men, but angels in human shape."—G. A. SMITH.

II. 8.—*The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

The Venetian gold ducat bore an abbreviated inscription which is to be read in full: "Sit tibi, Christe, datus, quem tu regis, iste Ducatus" ("To thee, O Christ, be given this ducat, which is Thine own coin").

II. 9.—François Coillard of the Zambesi wrote in 1880, describing the opening of the second *Maison des Missions* in Paris (1857):—

"I was struck by the text on which M. Grandpierre based his discourse, Haggai II. 9, 'The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former'. It was fine, but it was a

¹ "The Book of the Twelve Prophets," Vol. II, pp. 48, 49.

dream, to my mind impossible of realization. The first Mission House [closed in the Revolution of 1848] had a glory of its own. . . . It cradled a race of rare men, who belonged to another epoch than ours. . . . The missionary calling has no longer—it cannot have—the adventurous character of fifty or sixty years ago. No need now of courage and boldness and transcendent devotion for those who follow it. But ‘those that honour Me, I will honour,’ saith the Lord, and that is enough.”

The biographer of François and Christina Coillard recalls the fact that their heroic work and that of the French and Swiss Protestant Missions as a whole, owes its being to the Haldanes and to the evangelical forces they set in motion at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

ZECHARIAH.

“No prophet has more beautiful sympathies, and more direct word of righteousness, or a braver heart.”—G. A. SMITH.

VIII. 5.—*The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.*

“That is heaven,” said William Blake, leading a friend to the window and pointing out to him a group of children at play.¹

IX. 9.—*Behold, thy King cometh unto thee.*

“We now may say that the best interpretation of the Primitive Christian hope of the Parusia is the old Advent text: ‘Behold, thy King cometh unto thee’. From the Ptolemaic period down into the second century A.D. we are able to trace the word in the East as a technical expression for the arrival or the visit of the King or the Emperor. The Parusia of the sovereign must have been something well known even to the people, as shown by the facts that special payments in kind and taxes to defray the cost of the Parusia were exacted, that in Greece a new era was reckoned from the Parusia of the Emperor Hadrian, that all over the world Advent coins were struck after a Parusia of the Emperor, and that we are even able to quote examples of Advent sacrifices.”—ADOLF DEISSMANN.²

¹ Gilchrist’s “Life of Blake,” p. 319.

² “Light from the Ancient East,” p. 372.

XIII. 7.—*Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered* (with St. Matt. xxvi. 31).

This passage is put into Saladin's mouth by Sir Walter Scott in "The Talisman". Richard tries in vain to tempt the brave Soldan to single combat. "'Yonder,'" he says, 'are the lists ready, nor can Paynimrie ever hope a better champion than thou. I, unless worthier offers, will lay down my gauntlet in behalf of Christendom, and, in all love and honour, we will do mortal battle for the possession of Jerusalem.'

"There was a deep pause for the Soldan's answer. His cheek and brow coloured highly, and it was the opinion of many present, that he hesitated whether he should accept the challenge. At length he said, 'Fighting for the Holy City against those whom we regard as idolators, and worshippers of stocks and stones, and graven images, I might confide that Allah would strengthen my arm; or if I fell beneath the sword of the Melech Ric, I could not pass to Paradise by a more glorious death. But Allah has already given Jerusalem to the true believers, and it were a tempting the God of the Prophet to peril, upon my own personal strength and skill, that which I hold securely by the superiority of my forces.'

"'If not for Jerusalem, then,' said Richard, in the tone of one who would entreat a favour of an intimate friend, 'yet for the love of honour, let us run at least three courses with grinded lances.'

"'Even this,' said Saladin, half smiling at Cœur de Lion's affectionate earnestness for the combat, 'even this may I not lawfully do. The master places the shepherd over the flock, not for the shepherd's own sake, but for the sake of the sheep. Had I a son to hold the sceptre when I fell, I might have had the liberty, as I have the will, to brave this bold encounter; but your own Scripture sayeth, that when the herdsman is smitten the sheep are scattered.'

"'Thou hast had all the fortune,' said Richard, turning to the Earl of Huntingdon with a sigh. 'I would have given the best year in my life for that one half-hour beside the Diamond of the Desert!'

XIV. 20.—*Holiness unto the Lord.*

Dr. Livingstone wrote to his sister in 1839:—

“ Let us seek—and with the conviction that we cannot do without it—that all selfishness be extirpated, pride banished, unbelief driven from the mind, every idol dethroned, and everything hostile to holiness and opposed to the Divine will crucified ; that ‘ holiness to the Lord ’ may be engraven on the heart and evermore characterize our whole conduct. This is what we ought to strive after ; this is the way to be happy, this is what our Saviour loves—entire surrender of the heart. May He enable us by His Spirit to persevere till we attain it ! All comes from Him, the disposition to ask as well as the blessing itself ! ”

MALACHI.

Henry Martyn wrote in his Journal on 7 October, 1803 :—

“ Read Malachi, and was exceedingly refreshed by chap. III. to v. 16, and felt encouraged to every duty, particularly that of speaking to and exhorting others, which of late has appeared to be one of unlimited extent and insuperable difficulty.”

III. 6.—*I am the Lord, I change not ; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

At Taunton, which was held on behalf of the Parliament after the battle of Naseby, writes Dr. Stoughton, “ a remembrance continued fresh among the people of the Puritan minister’s sermon, preached in the grand old church of St. Mary, on the words : ‘ I am the Lord, I change not ; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed,’ and of the shouts of ‘ deliverance ! deliverance ! ’ which rang through the edifice before the sermon was finished, and which echoed from street to street as Welden’s squadron of horse dashed through the east gate to the market-place ;—nor could any forget the pause which followed in the church after the tidings had been heard, when all the congregation knelt down and thanked God for their deliverance.”¹

III. 16.—*Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.*

Carlyle wrote to Emerson in 1835 :—

“ Let us be grateful for mercies ; let us use them while they are granted us. Time was when ‘ they that feared the Lord

¹ “ History of Religion in England,” Vol. I, p. 418.

spake *often* one to another'. A friendly thought is the purest gift that man can afford to man. 'Speech' also they say, 'is cheerfuller than light itself.' "

III. 17.—When Henry Drummond was a child, the Rev. James Robertson, a noted children's preacher, held a service for all the Sabbath schools of Stirling in Erskine United Presbyterian Church. The building was so crowded that Henry and two other boys were taken into the pulpit. Mr. Robertson began his sermon by saying that the Bible is like a tree, each book a branch, each chapter a twig, and each verse a leaf. "My text is on the thirty-ninth branch, the third twig, and the seventeenth leaf. Try and find it for me." Almost immediately Henry slipped from behind him, and said, "Malachi, third and seventeen". "Right, my boy; now take my place and read it out." "Then from the pulpit came the silvery voice, 'And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels'. Mr. Robertson laid his hand on the boy's head and said, 'Well done, I hope one day you will be a minister'." ¹

IV. 5.—*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet.*

"There was an old Jewish custom," says Israel Abrahams, "of leaving the street doors open during meals, both as a general thing and in particular on the Passover night. A direct invitation was addressed to passers-by. 'All who need, let them join in our Passover; all who are hungry, let them enter and eat.' This paragraph was written in Chaldee, because the man in the street would best understand that language in Babylon, where the book was composed. . . . In the later Middle Ages a sort of faint shadow of the old custom may be caught. It became habitual to open the door on the Passover eve, at the end of the meal. This looks rather inhospitable, but the door was opened for a special guest; for Elijah, the harbinger of the Messiah. His wine cup was ready for him, let him enter and drink of it." ²

The Old Testament closes with "dreamings near the dawn," which, as Dante says, are "of the truth presageful". Elijah the prophet was long expected to return to his weary, scattered, exiled people (iv. 5).

¹ "Life of Henry Drummond" (1899), p. 24.

² "Aspects of Judaism," pp. 32, 33.

But a Greater than Elijah was at the doors. "Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings" (iv. 2). And as Mr. Honest said in the "Pilgrim's Progress," "were a man in a mountain of ice, yet if the Sun of righteousness should arise upon him, his frozen heart shall feel a thaw".

Dr. A. B. Davidson, in his inaugural lecture at New College, Edinburgh, in October, 1863, reminded his hearers that the theocratic life of the Old Testament culminates in the life of Christ.

"Thus then," he said, "all the Divine speech and energy, and guidance and consolation—in a word, the *grace*, the Divine condescension and self-approach to man, from the first even until now, bursting up from the abyss of brightness in rays of light upon our horizon, drawing to it the eyes of the fathers and their hearts—all are but vanward glories of the Sun of righteousness fully risen. And all the longing and travailing in pain, and hope half realized, and upward struggling of the Church are but prophetic of its fulness of life in Christianity."

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